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VERDICT ON BRITAIN

It is sad but true that where so called vital interests are concerned, logic and reason are thrown to the wind. Tyrants are indeed obdurate. The English tyrant is obduracy personified. But he is a multi-headed monster. He refuses to be killed. He cannot be paid in his own coin, for he has left none for us to pay him with. I have a coin that is not cast in his mint and he cannot steal it. It is superior to any he has yet produced. It is non-violence; and the symbol of it is the spinning-wheel. I have, therefore, presented it to the country with the fullest confidence.—*Mahatma Gandhi*

VERDICT ON BRITAIN

by

Prof. J. S. BRIGHT

NAWAB SALAR JUNG BA

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PREFACE

There have been many meek and mild, trite and timid, sweet and spineless replies, love-letters and petitions of mercy to His Exalted Highness Beverley Nichols, the Prince of the Realms of Gutter Fiction—the illustrious descendant of Her Exalted Highness “Miss” Mayo, the Duchess of the Dominions of the Drains.

I have been thoroughly disgusted with invertebrate replies to *Verdict on India*. I have no doubt you have been equally disappointed. The reviewers have expressed their strong dissatisfaction in the strongest possible terms. Even the British-owned *Illustrated Weekly of India* wants “to see something much more powerful” than the stuff already thrust on the market.

I waited and waited and waited for a really powerful book but waited in vain. Gauba came after a long spell, but Gauba failed us completely.

And imagine I had waited for six months to get a glimpse of Gauba’s book! Just think of my disappointment! For six months I stuffed away my manuscript with old clothes and boots, because I thought it won’t shine in comparison with Gauba’s brilliance. But when I saw Gauba’s book, I realised my blunder.

While Gauba, Jog and others were satisfied with pin-pricking and jabbing Mr. Nichols, I wrote this book with the set purpose of hacking the British Bulldog to pieces. While others were pleased with a leg of mutton, I claim for the reader—even like Shylock!—a pound of true British flesh.

This book follows a defensive and an offensive policy. While it counteracts the heartless insinuations of the ungrateful guest, it carries fire into heart of the enemy. On the offensive front I have chosen to follow an ideological line of action, so that it ceases

to be a temporary combat between this writer and that, and it becomes a matter of abiding and everlasting interest.

Many blunders of Mr. Nichols are due to the fundamental fact that he failed to notice the eternal clash of cultures between Mr. Winston Churchill and Mahatma Gandhi—between Churchillism and Gandhism—between England and India—between East and West—between God and Devil.

There is an elementary conflict between Materialism and Spiritualism—between the Material Monster of Britain and the Spiritual Sage of India—and that gulf is the cause of many misunderstandings, of which Mr. Nichols's is one.

I shall request Mr. Nichols to adjudge his views in the light of the principles expounded in this book. And the reader will no doubt revise his opinion too!

Mr. Beverley Nichols, walking upon his head, set out on his nocturnal voyage to India, abusing the overwhelming hospitality of our land, finding insects rather than affection in the garlands of flowers that large-hearted students put round his ungrateful neck, mistaking courtesy call of Indian leaders for the servile homage that English lords and ladies paid to Henry the Eighth, and belittling the most selfless leaders of India like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Khan Sahib, Sardar Patel and Sarojini Naidu the dust of whose feet mixed with mother's milk will cure British children of the greatest disease on earth—IMPERIALISM!

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE

J. S. B.

LAHORE

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CHAPTER ONE

Man or Ghost?

There are many men who are worse than many ghosts. The accent is on the word "ghost".

Mr. Beverley Nichols made *intensive study of modern India in only a year*.

If Mr. Nichols is a real, living, breathing man, he could only see the ghost of India in three hundred and sixty-five days. If he has seen a real, living, breathing India in twelve months, the spectator must indeed be a ghost, because only a disembodied author, a furlong above his hat, can accomplish that task of omniscient archery!

Mr. Nichols not only saw the face of India in a year, he dived deep into its psychological bowels. He covered politics? art? literature? music? medicine? journalism? cinema?—and "of course", religion, as if RELIGION were the easiest of all, and not the most difficult.

In a year's time that is physically

impossible. A man can see only a ghost of it and only a ghost can see all of it.

II

When we, the people of Hindustan, read *Verdict on India*, we were not surprised.

We were not taken aback by the verdict of the Pavement Artist (a designation which Mr. Nichols is pleased to apply to himself), as we were not taken aback by the mud-slinging of the Drain Inspectress.

We only felt that the ghost of our noble friend, the ex-Secretary of State for India (and of course, Burma!), the ex-Right Honourable L. S. Amery, had visited India.

The ghost takes great pains to prove that he has never met Mr. Amery. The dead never meet the living!

He has not seen him, otherwise Mr. Nichols could not be a ghost! He has not communicated with Mr. Amery. A ghost has no need to communicate!

The ghost has not *heard* Mr. Amery. The ghost has rather *chosen to speak* for Mr. Amery.

Mr. Nichols has not communicated with anybody connected with Mr. Amery. The ghost has directly connected himself with

the true friend of India in a mesmeric trance !

The ghost has not met Mr. Amery unto the third generation. Wonderful ! The ghost has not met Mr. Amery unto the fourth generation. Most wonderful !

Why Mr. Nichols takes all this trouble to prove all this ?

Well, it is just the habit of ghosts to talk of out-of-the-way things at a spiritistic seance. After all, a ghost is a ghost.

CHAPTER TWO

Churchillism in England

Mr. Beverley Nichols is essentially the noble child of British bureaucracy, fathered by Mr. Churchill, mothered by Mr. Amery, and brought up in the most magnificent bureaucratic temple—the India Office.

The truth is that there is not one Churchill in England, but many Churchills.

Churchillism is essentially a philosophy, Britain's brightest artificial eye, and in England there are many who are proud, puffed and pleased to wear it.

Churchillism is the eye of a cobra, an Indian cobra, or rather a cobra for digesting the life and liver of the Indian people; I think I should rather have said the British cobra, the mother of cobras, because a cobra alone can relish the mincing and mealing, chewing and digesting of its own children.

If the dependencies are induced to treat Great Britain as their mother, I only fear

the daughters have to be on their guard against their grandame cobra-mother, because serpent is a dangerous reptile in the world, even more dangerous for its own family than for the families of other people, because it eats up its own brood !

Churchill as embodied Imperialism and Imperialism as disembodied Churchill is a boa constrictor that twists and twines every tree of knowledge in every country.

British Imperialism may be aptly defined as an endeavour to misrepresent—further to quote Mr. Nichols—“the working of the Indian mind not only in politics but—*inter alia*—in art, in literature, in music, in medicine, in journalism, in the cinema, and, of course, in religion.”

II

Mr. Beverley Nichols belongs to the brood of Churchillism and its imperialistic household.

— There is no use saying that he has not met Mr. Amery, because I am sure he has met Mr. Churchill, and having shaken hands with the archbishop of imperial devildom, it is the height of ridicule to bow down your knees before the archdeacon of imperial

jugglery !

Had Mr. Nichols met Mr. Amery, he would have only met the ghost of Churchill. A man by the man's instinct, but a sickly sensitive author like Mr. Nichols even by a child's instinct, I should have said, the new-born babe's instinct, avoids the ghost. And that is why Mr. Nichols, with his author's chicken heart, dare not face the ghost of Mr. Churchill ; or even more than that, the historians yet unborn in the womb of Great Britain may have to make the surprising revelation that long-armed and strong-legged imperialist Mr. Amery frightened the weak-kneed Pavement Artist Mr. Nichols out of his presence.

Who knows the truth ?

Mr. Amery knows the truth, but he never tells it because that is the one great lesson he has husbanded from Mr. Churchill.

Mr. Nichols knows the truth, but he dare not tell it, otherwise his novel on India, that Pavement Artist's verdict, won't be the best seller.

And of course God knows the truth, but God has nothing but righteous contempt for British political children and their battledore

propaganda.

In the words of Lord Tennyson, the great representative poet of Churchillian progeny, God lives in his "golden girdled" house and smiles when "thunderbolts are hurled" on London and Liverpool, when British "cities are burning", when British "ships are sinking" and the British throats are "crying for help".

When the British people are weeping, God calls it a "music" (with apologies to Lord Tennyson of *Lotos Eaters*' fame!), because that is God's only reply to Britain's propaganda of falsehood and blackmailing.

Britain acts through speeches but God speaks through actions.

I fear I have gone far afield. Mr. Nichols has done well not to see Mr. Amery, because in Mr. Amery he could only see the rather distorted cartoon of Mr. Churchill which can be seen on any pennyworth of news-sheet. He has not heard Mr. Amery because in him he could hear "His Master's Voice"—no doubt, the voice of the greatest imperialist that Britain has the proud privilege to inflict on the innocent children of humanity.

There is not the slightest shadow of a doubt that Mr. Nichols has met

Mr. Churchill, seen him (I mean Mr. Churchill !), heard him (surely, I mean Mr. Churchill !), communicated with him (no doubt Mr. Churchill !), and communicated with everybody connected with him, unto the fourth and fifth generation (believe it or not, Mr. Churchill !).

III

After all Mr. Nichols (the Great Beaver !) has displayed a grain of truth in a ton of falsehood and jugglery. He confesses that *Verdict on India* is the work of the Pavement Artist.

We congratulate Mr. Nichols. Every Gandhi cap off to the Pavement Artist !

It is “ all my own work,” he says. Quite true. All his guess-work, he means ! That is the final and the foremost impression of every reader.

No wonder he visited India with bat's eyes and bat's wings and presented us with the bat's views of India.

Has Mr. Nichols bat's eyes or owl's eyes ? That is a problem for the physiologist.

Mr. Nichols might well have called his monumental work *Owl's Verdict on India* with a British monkey on the dust-

jacket weighing cheese for Indian communities, but largely for the benefit of its own stomach. Will he revise the book ?

IV

It is no use telling us that *Verdict on India* is not "British propaganda". It is essentially the propaganda of a Britisher. It is written by a Britisher. It expresses a Britisher's view. It upholds the British imperial tent in India.

What else can be called a British propaganda? Should we call it Indian propaganda? an American propaganda? an African or Turkish propaganda?

I wonder what kind of dictionary is found for reference on the shelves of my friend Mr. Beverley Nichols. I fear any schoolmaster in India could teach him the logical use of English words.

There is no use saying that *Verdict on India* does not represent the "official point of view". It does. It does a thousand times. Yes, the book does represent the official point of view a billion times.

If it does not represent the official view, does it represent the nationalist view ?

Unless something is seriously wrong with the English dictionary, we shall have to confess that something is dangerously wrong with the head of Mr. Nichols.

Either Mr. Nichols is a child or he thinks us children when he sets forth, hat-juggling all the while, that the book is "not sponsored by the India Office".

My dear Mr. Nichols ! there is the India Office in the head and heart of every British imperialist.

- India Office is not made of bricks. It is rather bricked up with an ideology of stripping naked the "have-not" nations.

Once you line yourself up with Churchill, the India Office travels to your bedchamber like a fairy island on the smoke-fumes of Churchill's characteristic cigar.

We in India who have never seen London always feel the shadow of the India Office right on our hearths and homes.

We live, we breathe, we die in the India Office.

Every day of every year and every hour of every day, we find India Office before us, India Office behind us, India Office above us and India Office below us.

There is no escape from the India Office. India Office haunts us like a nightmare. India Office suffocates our national struggle.

V

There is no use saying that Mr. Nichols did not visit the India Office. No doubt, the India Office visited him.

Mr. Nichols did not "possess" the India Office. It was the India Office that possessed him !

It deprived him of his humane judgment and made him quote the devil's bible for his "verdict".

There is not the slightest doubt that a dummy India Office was bleating in his head when he set out on his nocturnal voyage to India—the loveliest banquet-hall where the ungrateful guest abused the overwhelming hospitality in the most barbarous fashion, finding insects rather than affection in the garlands of flowers that large-hearted students put round his ungrateful neck, mistaking courtesy calls of Indian leaders for the servile homage that English lords and ladies paid to Henry VIII in the most blooming days of autocracy, and

belittling the most brilliant and the most selfless sons and daughters of India like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Khan Sahib, Sardar Patel and Sarojini Naidu, the most fearless fighters in the cause of freedom, the dust of whose feet mixed with mother's milk will cure British children of the greatest disease on earth—**IMPERIALISM!**

CHAPTER THREE

The Rococo Stafford Cripps

Great Britain has the first place of honour in producing the largest host of word-jugglers—a swarm of buzzing flies!—down the broad stream of centuries.

Messrs. Churchill, Amery and Nichols are the three greatest jugglers in the British Empire today. Of these the most coveted place of honour must go to Mr. Nichols.

I have carefully studied the works of Mr. Churchill. No doubt, he treats facts and figures as a box of letters, but he does not possess the fine art of barbaric distortion which is a peculiar possession of Mr. Nichols.

Mr. Amery's *India and Fræedom* lies before me and I don't find it half as poisonous (even though the half is quite fatal!) as *Verdict on India*.

Mr. Nichols has out-Churchilled Churchill and out-Ameried Amery.

Nobody doubts that Mr. Churchill is the cleverest diplomat in the British Empire,

and the cleverest user of words to conceal his diplomacy, but he does not brag full-facedly as Mr. Nichols is pleased to do. One year's stay in India has given him licence to write as he pleases, kicking all sense of decency into the gentle breeze on the Thames of merry old England. He seems to be suffering from pathological ideas that smack of "Rule, Britannia!".

II

No wonder, the national Press eyed Mr. Nichols with honest disdain. He swashbuckled himself as the self-styled ambassador of the British Empire. He tiptoed as an envoy incognito. He behaved as a man armed with all manner of secret weapons of diplomacy and intrigue. He has done more than anybody else to put an ugly slur on the fair-faced Great Britain. Great Britain is responsible for his irresponsible book.

Mr. Nichols did play the role of a sort of rococo Stafford Cripps.

No wonder, *The Bombay Sentinel*, the lively evening daily, announced that he had been offered the post of Viceroy. Nobody in India would be the least surprised

if he were really offered such a post. In fact he deserved such a job for the noble service he rendered to the noble cause of British Imperialism.

It will not trouble us the least if Mr. Amery were to quit the India Office in favour of Mr. Nichols "for value received". *Verdict on India* no doubt delivers the goods of Messrs. Churchill, Amery & Co. in India and America.

There have been many Nichols as Viceroys and many Viceroys as Nichols and many Nichols as Secretaries of State for India. John Bull has made us so blunt that we hardly feel their presence.

It was not *The Bombay Sentinel* that lost its sense of humour, but it was Mr. Nichols who lost the proportion of bureaucratic probabilities.

Not to speak of Beverley, even if a beaver were to occupy the highest office, we as Indians, the poor, starving, spineless citizens—so Mr. Nichols would like us to be!—have got to bow down our knees before him.

Under the great flag of the Great Britain, we don't respect the chairman—but the chair!

CHAPTER FOUR

The British Barbarian

“Have you met a *man* in the British Isles ? ”

That is a question that an Indian or a Chinese might profitably ask himself on his return from a European tour.

The Great Britain, of course, is a part of Europe only by geographic courtesy. The peoples of Europe, however, blush to call the Briton as their kin. He is too insular, cut off from the European brother in body and mind and soul—and in a marked degree, by the low level of culture and metaphysical understanding.

The truth is that no Englishman can understand metaphysics, while every Indian is a born metaphysician. The greater truth is that an understanding of metaphysics requires a highly developed and a highly civilised mind which is the heritage of every Indian and which is not the heritage of any Englishman. The greatest truth is

that the Britishers were barbarians not many centuries before and they have not—at least, not all of them!—come out of the barbarous mental shell.

Of course, they don't wear bearskins on their bodies, but their spirits are cent per cent bearish (they call them John Bullish!) and they still don't mind bearskins on their wits.

“Well, have you met a *man* in Great Britain?”

The question is startling, but the question is true. I guarantee its hundred per cent accuracy.

Met a *man*?

England has millions and millions of bipeds, two-legged creatures, but are they human beings?

Can they be called civilised?

There is no catch anywhere. Mr. Nichols need not rise to his feet. My question is not addressed to him.

Being himself a barbarian, it is impossible for him to know what a barbarian is.

II

The truth is that Great Britain has manufactured, and is still manufacturing,

great Britishers and petty Britishers, political scoops that press the button, and limbless workers that carry out the orders, by the millions to feed machines and guns and machine-guns in peace and war.

Great Britain—that is, England, Scotland and Wales—has Englishmen, Scotchmen and Welshmen always at loggerheads with one another in finance, business and imperial brigandage: an instinct they inherited from their hairy Britons and have by no means shaken off as yet.

England has also a large number of fops, called gentlemen. It would be more appropriate to call them tailor's men, because their place in society depends upon the cloth and the tailor's cut. Dress alone makes an Englishman a nobleman.

They have set apart morals for private vegetation in their vegetable gardens in the kitchen compound. Morals in public life are an unholy trespass. Every Britisher minds his own business. And there he is amply satisfied.

Yes, Great Britain has noblemen (if they are noble at all!), gentlemen (if they

can be called gentle by any stretch of imagination !), laundrymen, stablemen (oh, I utterly forgot them !), chimney-men (rather boys !), washermen (more in England than in Scotland !), seamen (who can't see men !), salesmen (who don't mind selling their soul for a few extra coppers !), sleeping men (I mean the partners !), and John Bulls of many kinds and qualities.

III

But are these *men* ?

The character of a Britisher is entirely " bogus ", to say the least of it.

" Every Englishman," says D.F. Karaka, " has consciously or unconsciously created his own barometer for measuring civilisation. According as the people are, or ape, the English, so they are civilised. The rest of the world, in one full swoop—by a sweep of the sword or a sharp stroke of the pen—are christened ' barbarians '."

Only a barbarian would behave like that.

No wonder, the Britishers are barbarians, suited and booted, but barbarians for all that, and that is the reputation that

they are doggedly maintaining on the Continent.

Civilised savages !

In England we find nothing what an Indian would call culture, nothing what a Chinese would name civilisation.

Great Britain is an intensely selfish country and a Britisher is an intensely selfish two-legged creature.

Britain need not take the trouble of dangling honesty in our face. An intense selfishness is the body and soul of the British Empire. Without barbarous selfishness there would have been no Empire.

Empires cannot be built on humane foundations. Humanity and barbarism go ill together. Humanity and imperialism go very much ill together.

India was never imperialist, because India was never barbarous. Great Britain has always been imperialist, because Great Britain has never been humane.

A century before Christ, Asoka the Great stopped all imperial wars because he could not bear the sight of human blood. Has Great Britain ever produced his equal ? Is Great Britain capable of that realisation

even twenty centuries after Christ ?

India produced Asoka the Great and Akbar the Great. Has Great Britain ever produced a great king ?

Has Great Britain produced a single sage of the level of Mahatma Buddha and Mahatma Gandhi ?

IV

What is it that entitles a Britisher to the respect of a civilised Indian or Chinese ?

Are we to respect their dinner-jackets, their cocktail parties, their midnight fumes, their negro dances, their negro jazz band, or red lantern quarters ?

It is a barbarous life that Great Britain is leading. Their behaviour is simply revolting to a foreigner.

Culture, true culture, is conspicuous by its absence in England. Even Oxford, the city of dreaming spires, has little to offer to a man who has drunk deep the sweet milk of Indian philosophy.

The British society is over-ridden by voluptuous Hellenism. It is a strange intermingling of barbaric culture and the anarchy of flaming youth.

Great Britain has done us great harm by dumping British barbarism on our simple civilisation. Indian and Chinese life are steeped in a hoary culture. It has reflected the noblest ideas that ever flashed across the soul of humanity.

Mr. Beverley Nichols has no right to try us by standards of British barbarism, entirely foreign to us, a cultured barbarism with which we blush to claim any kinship.

It is the greatest mistake, a blunder of first magnitude, for an Indian to ape Western civilisation. The understanding Europeans themselves have realised the fact. One such remarkable document is an essay *On Europe and Asia* by Chesterton.

“We have not succeeded,” he says, “in making the remote Asiatic feel like a Christian; but we have succeeded in making him look like a cad.”

That is the sorriest comment by a very sincere Englishman on the successful penetration of British barbarism into the holy gardens of India !

V

The height of British civilisation (Mr. Karaka alone can illustrate that !) is

the top floor of a London departmental store. It contains "refrigerators, cold storage, furs". But having reached this climax, the British civilisation sinks down gradually into the bowels of the earth.

"It is capable of sinking," says the brilliant author, "into the most ignoble depths to which man has in the chequered history of the world been degraded."

This is the culture of our British lords.

For two centuries the British barbarism has trampled with impunity the civilisation of India. There is no hope that Britain will ever loosen that stranglehold.

How long, my God, how long!

There are still renegade colonels in Great Britain, who shout "Rule, Britannia!" with all the patriotism of their second childhood.

If the Britishers had the slightest touch of humanity about them, Mahatma Gandhi would have got *Purna Swaraj* long ago. British barbarism is alone responsible for torpedoing the programme of non-violent non-co-operation.

The failure of the Indian National Congress is the failure of the British

civilisation.

The body of Christ turns indignantly upon the crucifix to see his British lambs grazing greedily on the pastures of Hindustan.

Imperialism is a blemish on the face of Christianity.

The Britishers cannot be Christians and Imperialists at one and the same time. It is as impossible in spiritual geometry as a square circle.

VI

Mr. Churchill *cannot* call himself a Christian. Nor Mr. Amery. Nor our friend Mr. Beverley Nichols.

They have abused the commandments of Christ a thousand times.

Nor are Christians the sun-baked officials of the Indian Civil Service. They have sucked our blood and spat in our faces.

If these are Christians, then let us tear the Bible leaf by leaf and fling it into the fire and begin anew the sweet sunny life of babes in the wood, struggling hard to grope our way through the thick undergrowth of British barbarism.

It is time that the British people think less of politics, less of imperial exploitation, and more of religion and spiritual enlightenment.

Mere physical gratification is not enough. That is essentially the characteristic of barbarous animality.

The British people have lived too long on the materialistic philosophy of life. Now sand is slipping under their feet.

Their barbaric civilisation is essentially living on its capital. It cannot hold out any more.

The European outlook with its demoniac ideals of material possession has sprawled itself upon the surface of the globe like thick cobweb-tangled undergrowth.

The Indian philosophy with its angelic ideals of spiritual enlightenment has worked into the sky, stately and towering, like a tree and provided a shady and cosy corner for the weary traveller instead of getting trapped in his feet.

What are Milton and Shakespeare as compared with Kalidas and Tagore !

VII

The sun rises in the East. The East

has always been, and still is, the ever-flowing fountain of knowledge. The time has come when the West must look to East again.

The British imperialists have neglected the spiritual gems of Hindustan and pleased themselves with pebbles of materialism.

The greatest secrets of India are still unearthed and these await the new spirit of adventurous Englishmen. These are spiritual gems which alone can save the British Empire for the British people.

Let Nichols and Nichols come again, but let them come with a receptive spirit. Let them not adjudge India with a jaundiced eye. They must unlearn a great deal before they can hope to achieve the threshold of true knowledge.

One year is not enough, Mr. Nichols ! One year is not enough even to remove your European spectacles and clear your eyes and mind.

Mr. Nichols ! your people look without and find darkness within and judge the material prosperity by external demonstration.

Our people, Mr. Nichols, look within and get the true flame of light within and

judge the external world as an illusion.

That is a marked difference, Mr. Nichols, and unless you come up to our level, you will never know what we are and what we stand for.

“Ye,” said Christ, “who have ears may hear and ye who have eyes may see.”

I am sorry, Mr. Nichols, you have neither eyes to see the beauty of India nor ears to hear the music of our country.

Certainly, we cannot be indignant with a dumb and deaf author for the blunders found in the *Verdict on India*.

It is essentially the verdict of a barbarian—a British Barbarian !

CHAPTER FIVE

The Elusive Indian

“ *The Elusive Indian!* ”

That is the sanest heading in one of the most insane books by one of the most insane Britishers that ever stepped out into the heart of Hindustan to reap a harvest of notoriety and ill-name.

True Indian is always elusive, because he treats the world as *maya* or illusion.

True Indian cares nothing for the glories of the British Empire. He regards it a mere fleeting fancy, a passing show, a temporary phenomenon.

For a true Indian a century is a mere second and the British Empire, by that divine standard, has been in India for two seconds only. It may not last another second.

True Indian cares not a jot for the pomp and pride of the British achievement. He regards it a mere mumbo-jumbo, a sheer *tamasha*.

True Indian cares nothing for Attlees, Trumans, Stalins and Hitlers. He values his peace of mind far above the kings and the crowns, their Churchillian dancers and Amery-an trumpeters and Beverley-an gramophones.

The kings may come and the kings may go, the thrones may tumble down, Churchills and their henchmen may fade into the distant horizon never to be heard of again, but the Indian mind is stable in an ocean of perpetual change, trouble and turmoil.

The Indian has a definite lesson for the peoples of the world, which the Britishers will not let anybody heed to keep up their own prestige of false superiority.

The Elusive Indian is the one man who can redeem the world from its grip of human butchery.

O Britain! you may be Great Britain, but you have got to listen the voice of the "Little Elusive Indian".

The future generations will hold Great Britain responsible for the Second World War, because Great Britain is responsible for suffocating the throat of the Elusive Indian.

II

Where is the Elusive Indian ?

Mr. Beverley Nichols looked for him from the fertile Frontier to the lush fringes of Travancore.

He wandered from the flesh-pots of Bombay to the famine-bowls of Calcutta with blind eyes and declared that India was an uninhabited country, cut and dry for white man's burden.

His blindness took him to the hospital and there his eyes opened, and the first Indians he saw were four murderers and he mistook them for the true representatives of India, as if the murderers in British hospitals are as good as Churchills, Amerys and Nicholsons.

In fact, they are !

That is not a blind man's verdict as Beverley's "verdict" is.

I wonder why the Pathan doctors at Peshawar did not recommend Mr. Nichols for admission into the mental hospital at Ranchi !

It was a fit case for insanity !

The intellectual blindness of Mr. Nichols was not cured. He closed his eyes to the seething sea of humanity around him.

The truth is that he was sex-starved.

No wonder, the eyes of the self-styled British ambassador opened again when he found himself face to face with a bevy of nautch-girls in the brilliant court of Mysore.

Those girls did for Mr. Nichols what the doctor had failed to do. His river of turbulent emotions was let loose. "Once seen," he said, "they could never be forgotten."

No wonder, Mr. Nichols never forgot them !

He called them the rare specimens of Indians when he returned home, as if the British dancing-girls are the noblewomen of the British Nation ! In fact, one shouldn't wonder if they command that status, because life is "free" in British cities !

If Uncle Sam has his "grease spot", John Bull has it too !

Mr. Nichols was delighted with the shining qualities of the dancing-girls.

They gyrated for his benefit as they have been gyrating for the benefit of the British "nabobs" since the days of Lord Clive.

They have twisted their hips and

wobbled their necks to please the representatives of the British Empire.

Having seen murderers, his homogeneous friends, and prostitutes, his heterogeneous comrades, Mr. Nichols felt that he had met the "Elusive Indian".

III

Well, Mr. Nichols, the Elusive Indian is not found in hospitals and dancing halls.

The Elusive Indian is found in the forests, in the lonely nooks of hills, in the solitary villages, in the temples, and in the mosques.

The fact is forgotten that every true Indian is a small Mahatma Gandhi as every true Britisher is a petty Winston Churchill.

Every Indian is a born saint as every Britisher is a born diplomat.

Every Britisher is by nature a fox as every Indian is by nature a lamb.

Christ rules over India while Britain has sold its soul to the devil.

There is not one Mahatma Gandhi but many Mahatma Gandhis in India just as there is not one Churchill but many Churchills in Great Britain.

India is the land of the *mahatmas* as Great Britain is the happy hunting-ground of the political demons—and literary devils.

Mahatma Gandhi is not the greatest but the commonest Indian. He is the chief spokesman of the mute “Little Elusive Indian”. There are saints in India even greater than Mahatma Gandhi. These are people who will not dabble in politics even if the crowns of the seven continents were offered to them.

IV

What are these religions on which Mr. Nichols is pleased to harp in order to produce political tunes?

What are these Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Parsis?

Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism (the religion of the Parsis) are as dead in India as Christianity is dead and buried in Europe.

These communities are mere shells in which the British Imperialists are perpetually blowing political motives to keep the big show of the British Empire a running concern.

In India there is no Hindu who is true to the principles of Hinduism; nay, it is impossible to be a Hindu in the Western design of things.

There is no Muslim who is true to Islam.

Is Mr. Jinnah a Muslim?

For years the Muslims regarded him outside the orthodox fold of Islam.* In fact he is as ignorant of Islam as any non-Muslim can be. He has never observed any of the five rites enjoined by the Holy Quran on Muslims.

Ch. Fazal Haq, the well-known Ahrar leader, in his book *Pakistan* says :

“Mr. Jinnah is an able lawyer but admittedly the last Mussulman on earth to know anything of Islam.”

What is true of Islam and Hinduism is equally true of Sikhism and the religion of the Parsis.

The communal leaders are misleaders, and they dance to the tunes of the British masters.

The British Imperialists have not only sinned against humanity but they have also sinned against God, because they have made a mockery of our noblest emotions by

changing our mosques and temples into fish markets and gambling places for political power. They have transformed our priests into petty propagandists for teaching us loyalty to “the King and the Country”—the country, of course, means the British Empire.

Once the British step out of India, the Indian religions will go the way of Russia.

And the sooner they do the better!

Another Beverley Nichols in another century won't meet temples and mosques but only libraries and public halls.

•
V

But the Little Elusive Indian?

He never dies. He belongs to all faiths and religions. He is a Hindu and Muslim and Sikh and Christian. He knows nothing but universal love. “By Love Serve One Another” is ingrained in his nature. He lives unknown in obscure nooks of India.

He is not a student but the teacher of Mahatma Gandhi.

He learnt the great principle of non-violence when the Britons were savages—and still they are, for habits die hard.

and that is why the British are a nation of die-hards !

The Elusive Little Indian does not live by the courtesy of tailors, cooks and doctors.

He lives by the grace of God alone.

His clothes are untailored, if he has clothes at all, his doctors are conspicuous by their absence, and he plays the cook himself, and even prefers an uncooked meal.

There will be revolt in Britain if such conditions were to prevail in Britain but there is no revolt in Britain if such conditions prevail in British India.

The Elusive Little Indian is the child of Earth, Water and Air.

He knows not the littlest modern comforts, without which the entire British Nation would commit suicide rather than linger out an aching existence.

The Elusive Little Indian sees nothing but Lust, Wrath, Greed, Temptation and Ego overwhelming Great Britain.

And the British folk will know one day that the Elusive Little Indian is right.

And the Limelit Great Britisher is wrong !

The Indian never dies.

He travels from birth to death and death to birth again, but there is no Great Beyond for the haughty Great Briton !

The Elusive Little Indian will live to see the last embers of the British Empire !

Great Britain will change into Barbaria while the humble little Indian will watch the great conflagration, resting his chin on a plough ! (Remember the Atomic Bomb !)

The Indian plays with God while the British plays with the demon.

While the British Nation burns its candlelight in theatres and ball-rooms, the Elusive Little Indian enjoys the company of angels in temples and mosques.

While the Britisher holds a noisy match at the Lords—a reminder of the barbarian gladiators—the Indian cheers up the team of souls under the banyan tree !

While the Britisher hurries and harries himself to death in the screws of the mechanical age, the carefree Elusive Indian remains the liveliest and the loveliest in spirit till the end of life !—"Till the last bell call" !

If the British statesmen had grey matter in their brains, they would have relished his

Whosoever lives with him lives like a member of the family.

One of the inmates of his house in Africa was a Christian. He came of *Pancham* parents. The *Panchams* are regarded as untouchables. Gandhiji's wife did not like that. There was a quarrel between the husband and the wife. Gandhiji lost his temper and turned Kasturbai out of the house. She appealed to him not to make scenes. The quarrel was patched up. Gandhiji won the day.

Yet Mr. Nichols, utterly ignorant of the life of Mahatma Gandhi, dare call him "the greatest enemy the untouchables have ever had in India".

II

Mahatma Gandhi has spent more time for the welfare of the untouchables than he has devoted to the cause of freedom. He has observed historic fasts for them. He has compelled the Hindus to throw open the wells and temples for them. He has started schools, social centres, and industries entirely for the benefit of the untouchables and their children.

Mahatma Gandhi has devoted the best

part of his time to the *Harijan*, a weekly, which he started to enlist the sympathy and support of Hindus and non-Hindus for the uplift of the untouchables.

All *ashrams* of Mahatma Gandhi are as open to untouchables as to the Hindus of the highest caste.

He has sacrificed and is always ready to sacrifice the caste-ridden Hindus, whose race is now fast becoming extinct, rather than dissociate himself from the untouchables.

All funds of Mahatma Gandhi are first open to the Harijans and then to anybody else.

Mahatma Gandhi, far more than a thousand Ambedkars and a million Beverleys, has fixed the attention of the world on the condition of the untouchables.

And yet Mr. Beverley, unacquainted with the political history of India, is pleased to call Mahatma Gandhi "the greatest enemy of the untouchables" !

III

Mahatma Gandhi has stated times and again, with all the force at his command,

that the political independence of India cannot be perfect if there is a single untouchable left in India.

Has a British Bull ears to hear?

And what does the British Bull know of the untouchables?

His knowledge is limited to the bulky belly of Dr. Ambedkar, the greatest enemy of the Mahatma (with apologies to Mr. Jinnah!) and the most servile friend of the British Empire, which indeed is not the quality of Mr. Jinnah.

Thinking of Dr. Ambedkar, the most ignoble patriot, Mr. Jinnah may be regarded as the most noble foe of the national forces.

Mr. Jinnah stands upon his own legs while Dr. Ambedkar moves on a pair of wooden stilts presented to him by the Churchillian imperialists.

To trust the word of Dr. Ambedkar against Mahatma Gandhi is to trust the word of Hitler against Stalin.

Is the knowledge of Mr. Beverley Nichols, who made a year's intensive study of India, limited to this that he calls Mahatma Gandhi "the greatest enemy of the untouchables", because an Indian misleader said it so?

IV

Well, my dear Nichols, Dr. Ambedkar is not an untouchable in the eyes of the millions of caste Hindus.

He does not bring pollution if his Mayfair dinner-jacket—which the caste Hindus can ill-afford—should happen to brush against their *dhotis*.

The extreme orthodox does not fly from Dr. Ambedkar as though he were a leper—although no doubt he is a political leper!

Even though Dr. Ambedkar is the most unpatriotic monster, his closest contact does not compel the caste Hindus to precipitate themselves into the nearest bath-tub, but let Mr. Beverley Nichols know that, thanks to the inroads of his forefathers, India is too poor to afford even bath-tubs. Wandering in a country completely denuded by the British exploiters, Mr. Nichols sees the ghost of London.

The people of India do pray when they bathe at the wells and in the streams, but they *cannot* “soap and pray”—as Mr. Beverley imagines, because 99·9 per cent of the people in India never use soap in their lifetime.

It may sound strange to foreign ears,

but it is true. The British bureaucracy has rendered us too poor for this luxury !

People of India don't wash the filth of Dr. Ambedkar, but they do wash the filth of " M.A. (London) " !

To go to England for higher education is to pay a heavy price for educational filth.

A man who goes to Britain for higher education is a traitor to the Indian Nation. He suffers from an inferiority complex and servility to the Britisher. He plays foul with his parents and ducks and drakes with their money.

For India an " M.A. (London) " is an economic burden—and shame !

Similarly, high honours at Columbia University are the plague and scourge of India, and special distinction at Heidelberg should be washed for ever from our immaculate and immortal souls.

V

But do we wash the filth of Dr. Ambedkar ?

We only wash the political filth of Dr. Ambedkar.

It is Dr. Ambedkar who regards the

Hindus as untouchables !

It is true that India had four castes in the ancient days : Brahmin, Kshatri, Vaish and Shudra.

The last were the slaves of the wheel of labour—"untouchables".

Ever since the British imperialism has pounced upon India, the castes have assumed a perverted character.

In the good old Aryan days, castes were based on the standard of learning and culture. The Brahmins were the highest, because they were the highest-educated.

Under the British regime, the system of caste is based upon the quality of your dress and the quantity of your bank balances.

If a Shudra—an untouchable—is well-dressed and has a few chips in his pocket, he can enter any hotel, and nobody worries about his caste, colour and creed.

If a Brahmin—high caste—is dirtily dressed and without money, he will be refused admittance : nobody worries about his high caste.

I have seen many such Brahmins in Madras refused admittance at Brahmin hotels while the untouchable Christians were

highly welcomed.

In the Modern India no castes exist. These are only the figments of the British brains.

Today a caste, an economic class, is determined by coins and coins alone.

And that is why the untouchables in India have come up on the top while the Brahmins have gone down to the bottom.

The Brahmins are lazy scholars and consequently they are poor—extremely poor in British India !

The untouchables by dint of their industry are making great progress.

In modern India the untouchables look down upon the Brahmins ! These are Brahmins who fear the untouchables.

Not only that.

Some of them are rich, because they are followers of the Union Jack, and some of them follow the Union Jack because they want to be rich.

High caste in India has become synonymous with loyalty to the British because loyalty to the British brings gold and gold today is the acid test of high caste in India.

That is why Dr. Ambedkar (an un-

touchable!) is a member of the Viceroy's Council while Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (a Brahmin!) has often been rotting in the British jails.

VI

Surely nobody in India worries about the castes in India.

The British rulers still keep up the show of untouchables to satisfy their lust of superiority and to serve their political motives.

For the people of India themselves new castes have come into existence. And these are essentially economic castes.

The British have created knights (rather "nights" of nationalism), and these British-made Brahmins form the highest class, and their status consists in the fact that they have sold their motherland to the foreigners. This is the highest caste in British India, barring the Indian Princes who form a super-caste, because they have sold not only the country but also their bodies and souls to the white slave-owners.

Next come the Khan Bahadurs, Sardar Bahadurs, Rai Bahadurs and Rao Bahadurs. These people have won British laurels

by selling their conscience.

The third class consists of Rai Sahibs, Rao Sahibs, Khan Sahibs and Sardar Sahibs. These people have sold their hearths and homes to the British traders in order to pay their way in life.

Then there are Indians in the I.C.S. who have thoroughly out-casted themselves. They refuse to be Indians and fail to be Britishers !

Well, the British-made castes do not end there.

India has political careerists, all British creations, who are prepared to bow down their knees seven times a day for seven years, if they were offered a job carrying seven hundred rupees a month.

The British Bull knows that anybody who speaks for freedom has his value and John Bull is prepared to pay his price to keep his mouth closed.

O Indian graves ! keep shut, lest Britain be shamed, because even the pettiest clerks in the pettiest British offices are not free from the pettiest influences that the pettiest British officers are busy spreading ceaselessly.

This—economic enslavement—is the

modern British-made untouchability !

VII

There is one and only one way of removing untouchability.

Raise the standard of living !

Let the Harijans be suited and booted, after their day's duty is done, as the Harijans in the West are, and who will deny them admittance into a hotel or a temple ?

Who will refuse to mix with them ?

Which caste-lord will be so rude as to cold-shoulder them ?

True untouchability is not in the low-born skin. It is in the dirty clothes.

Dirtiness is the greatest untouchability on earth.

By dressing India decently we lift it out of the touch-me-not slums.

We have not to fight against untouchability.

Our real enemy is the seething poverty of the seething masses.

And here the British are even more guilty than ever.

They have starved India of industrialisation in order to quench the unquenchable

thirst of the British mechanical monsters, and consequently they have tightened the stranglehold of economic untouchability on the throats of the Indian masses.

VIII

Had there been National Government in India, there would have been no economic starvation—and no untouchability.

The British monster policy does not stop short at political quagmire.

The Bull goes out of its way to attack our economic citadel and religious shrines.

One uniform policy of the British Imperialists has been not merely to govern India but to sap its physiological existence.

India requires a full-fledged American-scale industrialisation. And this Britain must give us. And give us immediately.

Britain has long denied us freedom. Britain must not deny us food any longer.

India must be industrialised in the quickest and the shortest possible time through co-operative and legislative action.

Indian industries must be encouraged along healthy co-operative lines, avoiding all cut-throat competition.

The British must defend the Indian

industries against British competition, and that is one problem which the British Imperialists, with their low standard of international honesty, can never bring themselves up to tackle.

Nevertheless, they must try, because it is worth trying in the interest of humanity.

It is the sacred duty of the British Nation, if the people of Britain still believe in God, Christ (and the Holy Ghost !) to fight unemployment in India and to raise the general standard of living.

Willy-nilly the British Imperialists (if they have not got stony hearts !) must eradicate beggary in India, because beggary and untouchability are synonymous.

They must start work-houses, financed by the public and the Government and supported by appropriate legislation.

If the British hope to live for another quarter of a century in India (as no doubt, they do !), they should at once materialise a scheme of National Insurance through co-operation and/or legislation to protect orphans, widows, the decrepit and the unemployed.

The British must take an active part in the general economic advancement of the

country.

The British (if they want to stay any longer in India !) must save the people from demoralisation.

The people of India can wait for freedom, but they cannot wait for food. The masses cannot bolster up the British Empire for a day—on empty stomach !

The people of India may have freedom tomorrow but they must have food today. This very day !

But only a National Government at the centre can provide food for the masses. India has already met her Stalingrad in Churchillian imperialism, and that is a mortal danger to which the British Labour must not expose themselves.

IX

It is true that the spearhead of Indian freedom has temporarily failed. Time has come to fortify our defences in the rear.

But Marcus Aurelius, the royal philosopher of Rome, told us centuries ago that universal substance is a torrent. It sweeps all things in its course. No doubt it sweeps the British Empire—and the British Imperialists too. It has already

swept Mr. Churchill—and Mr. Amery into the bargain !

And what poor creatures are those dwarfs of British statesmen?—with apologies to Marcus Aurelius !

The pigmy British politicians are busy with their weighty matters of State.

The British Imperialists play the philosopher to their own satisfaction.

They are children in need of a nurse !—again, with apologies to the philosopher king.

What will an Indian nationalist do ?

Let us do the work that Nature now demands of us, since we cannot do what the British Imperialists ask of us—since we cannot bend down on our knees before them.

We must set about the task of industrialisation and the social reconstruction as best as we can.

We must not look round to see if the British Imperialists observe us !

The Indian nationalists cannot hope for Plato's Eutopia.

We must rest content with the smallest progress made, because the British die-hards will not permit us to make the smallest

progress, if they could put another spoke in our wheels.

We must remember that the smallest progress we make in India, we make it in the teeth of British opposition—opposition tooth and nail! Therefore, it is no small thing. It is no small consummation. For who can change the British Imperialist's opinion?

And yet, if the opinions of the British Imperialists remain unchanged, what have we except British slaves in British India, groaning in their British bondage and simulating British obedience?

X

This is the fate of an average Indian.

Our 'political, social and economic bondage has reduced us to the level of negro slaves.

The British alone are responsible for our degradation.

Not that India *has* untouchables. India *is* the land of untouchables.

Our standard of living (under the British) has fallen so low, that from Mahatma Gandhi down to the poorest peasant, we are 'all untouchables.

A proud Britisher, the author of our woes, will not touch us with a pair of tongs.

On the top of all, the British Imperialists, the fathers of modern untouchability in India, blame us for untouchables.

Is it not Britain's greatest insult to India?

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Stormy North

“Another distinguished visitor, of very different convictions, was Dr. Khan Sahib his greatest claim to fame is that his brother is Abdul Ghaffar Khan. . .”

Mr. Beverley Nichols writes as if a British bull had learnt to use a pen.

Every Britisher who visits India feels as if he has got a licence from the British Government to belittle India's most selfless leaders.

What a British “Beaver” knows of the North-West Frontier?

The Frontier is a giant lizzard on the shoulder of British imperialism. It has sucked its vitality much more than any other part of the British Empire.

The Frontier bids fair to be the graveyard where the final funeral ceremonies of John Bull will be performed. And one's would-be graveyard is not a place which anybody with a head on his shoulders can

take lightly.

The war clouds on the Afghan horizon, with a shower of bombs, are caused by rude and ruthless imperialists. The Mistress of the Seas does not mind its own business. Great Britain must meddle with the affairs of other people.

“The North-West Frontier,” said the Simon Commission, “is not only the frontier of India; it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole Empire.”

That is why the British might is always on the throat of the democratic Pathan !

II

I call the Pathan “democratic”, because if the British Imperialists care to study his history, they will find that a Pathan has an inborn love for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.

The Pathan people are the greatest victims of British misrepresentation !

The Frontier is the breeding ground of the warlike races. Races that have conquered the globe through the centuries. Possessed themselves of the earth from Lahore to London.

The British Bulls have spared no pains to curb the wild freedom of the hills. The Pathans are living today not with British help but in spite of it.

Among the Pathan tribes equality rules supreme. Even though they have no governments they observe the letter and spirit of their code of honour.

Nearly half the British army in British India is cantoned along the Frontier to trample on the life and liver of four hundred thousand fighting men of the border hills. This sums up in a nutshell the British Frontier policy.

The Pathans are one of the hardest races that the world has ever seen. Children of the torn and storm-swept hills, they have long defied the very hand of British oppression.

Off and on the British authorities are heavily involved in border troubles. They find fun. Perhaps, fodder for their idle guns. Nevertheless, the Pathans have kept up their democratic character in spite of the British storm and stress.

The blunt knife of the Pathan is a terror to the British Imperialist. Instead of paying a tribute to the British soldier, he

expects the British soldier to pay him a tribute. And the British soldiers do it on pain of death !

Born and bred up in an atmosphere of independence the psychology of the Pathan is of strong fabric. A simple form of self-government prevails among the tribes. It develops self-reliance, courage, sobriety and resourcefulness. It gives the Pathan a Spartan outlook. The rivalry of party in the tribal councils sharpens his wit. There is no caste in border society. Every Pathan thinks himself as good as another. The political climate of the Frontier is bracing. It agrees remarkably with the tender plant of democracy.

A Pathan makes no distinction of persons. He is not awed in the presence of high authority. He expresses no wonder at the curiosities of Western civilisation ! No wonder, it is not easy material to work up into loyalty of the British Empire. So the British Empire is always at loggerheads with the Pathan.

But the British do find or manage to *make* well-to-do yeomen families. They send their sons to school. They give them an English education. The boys come into

contact with various aspects of modern civilisation. As they go up to the Islamia College, they take deepening interest in the newspaper. No wonder, patriotism stirs up their dormant spirit. They still respect the brave individual Englishman ; but they lose their faith in the mighty British structure.

On the Frontier there is many " a day of pain, shame, grief and humiliation for every Englishman in India " (with apologies to a high British officer !).

Every Englishman in India is himself the author of this pain, shame, grief and humiliation. What right a Britisher has to meddle with the freedom of the Pathans ?

III

Of late the Pathan has come under the political creed of the Indian National Congress.

Like the martial Sikh, the Pathan has taken to non-violence as duck takes to water.

He is working under the influence of Khan Brothers to transmute the wild freedom of the hills into ordered democracy.

The sense of patriotism has worked its way into the Pathan mind.

Does this not strike a terror in the mind

of the British Imperialist? It does.

The Pathans are a gifted people. They are brave, intelligent and self-reliant. They have a strong sense of nationalism. Every man is a soldier ready at any moment of danger. They have all the civic virtues.

They mirror an ordered scheme of family relations. Every member is a soldier and law-giver. There is no regular magistracy. No leadership in the field. There is in most cases complete equality among the tribesmen.

The tribal lands are redistributed at intervals of thirty years. It secures tribal cohesion. Also it prevents any tribesman from exploiting his neighbour.

In theory the system of tribal law is complete. There is no law-making in process. There is no authority to enforce tribal decisions except the tribal *lashkar*.

Are these the qualities which a British fears so mortally on the Frontier?

The British Imperialists must pause and think, think and pause. It is a thoughtful moment for the British Empire!

The Pathan has his complete code of honour. Asylum cannot be refused, even to the most contemptible Britisher!

The Pathan must spare his enemy, even

if he be a British "Beaver", if intercession is made.

The outlaw who seeks refuge cannot be given up to the British authority.

Responsibility for safe conduct once assumed must be carried through even at the risk of life.

These are the qualities which a Britisher would admire in Britain. Why does he not admire them in India?

IV

The magnetic influence of the Khan Brothers has transformed loose, purposeless, go-as-you-please bullets of the tribal, head-strong youngsters into well-knit, purposeful, obey-at-any-cost cannon-balls of penetrating patriotism.

This is what has terrified the Britisher.

By joining the Congress, the Pathan has lost his credit balance with the Government.

Disordered heroism can be tolerated at any rate; but ordered patriotic heroism is too much for the nerves of John Bull.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as "The Frontier Gandhi", is the national leader of the North-West Frontier.

There is a striking resemblance between

the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek of China and the Frontier Gandhi. They both are cut out for military leadership. Both of them are leading an ascetic life by a supreme effort of will. Their standard of living is at the bottom of society. Neither of them is fond of pomp and show. The Frontier Gandhi has given up even taking tea.

That a warm and warry Pathan should become a firm follower of non-violence is nothing short of a psychological revolution.

He is the first Gandhi to be a Frontierman and the first Frontierman to be a Gandhi.

But what does a Britisher care for the moral self-conquest of a man?

He only cares for fishes and loaves.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan has long been rotting in British jails continually and continuously ever since he decided to preach and practise the cause of non-violence.

How is it that the British Imperialists are more afraid of non-violence than of violence?

They can stand the bullets of the Pathans but they cannot understand the passive resistance of the Frontier Gandhi.

It is a curious distortion of British

nature, not found elsewhere in the world.

Only a British pathologist will some day explain the British pathology.

The Frontier Gandhi is a magnetic personality. His striking appearance has an element of charm. He towers over six feet and a quarter.

His likeness of perfect and strong simplicity and simple strength you will not find elsewhere in the British Empire.

The flame of patriotism is aglow in his soul. He seldom talks, but he always acts.

He is always doing something for his province. What? Face an Empire? Yes, he is always facing the mighty British Empire !

He has need for all the strength he can muster.

The entire armed force of the British Government is keyed up to crush an armless soldier of peace, carrying on absolutely legal activities to improve the lot of his people.

If you want to see the British injustice and oppression at its highest frenzy, you will find it in the Frontier.

The British rule in the Frontier, peace or war, is bound to remain the greatest stigma on the face of Great Britain.

But for the impudent British behaviour, the Frontier Gandhi would have been in the army.

Yes, the British army !

In fact, he did think of joining the army when he came out of the college. There was every reason that he should. He had the build of a soldier, the grasp of a general. Moreover, he belonged to a brilliant lineage of Frontier yeomen. Army was the "natural" profession for him. His family liked it. And there was every reason that he should:

As he was making up his mind, he went to see a friend in the military headquarters at Peshawar. There he saw something which embittered his mind beyond description.

A young junior British officer was insulting an old senior Indian officer.

It was the same old white-black tangle—a "colour-bar" problem. The white master bleeding the black slave red !

Iron ran into the soul of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan ! Here was the turning point in his career. And here was the turning point in the career of imperialism, because John Bull met his most formidable foe in

the Frontier Gandhi !

From that moment he determined not to serve the demon of war. On the other hand, he became a soldier of peace.

Ever since his life has been an essay in renunciation which the British officers with their purblind eyes have never cared to appreciate.

On the altar of a national cause, he has been doomed to be a confirmed jail bird. Under the British regime it is a high treason to serve your country !

The Frontier Gandhi carried the torch of patriotism into his province. With zest and zeal, he has enlisted the sympathies of his people for a great and glorious cause. Success has always followed the banner of his enthusiasm. Thousands upon thousands of eager, curious, want-to-do-something Pathans have attended his meetings.

Once Ghaffar Khan was arrested before the eyes of his ninety-year-old father who walked all the way to hear his son addressing the people.

The Frontier Gandhi was imprisoned without a trial. Then the Police Chief led a deputation to the caged bird. He persuaded the boy to desist from anti-British.

activities.

The kind concern of the police was understandable. The grandfather of Abdul Ghaffar had fought on the side of the British, but the young Khan lent no ear to the sweet voice of bureaucracy. So John Bull fell in a rage.

The Government also arrested the aged father. The old man, in the shadow of a century, had imbibed the influence of his son. He had travelled all the way from dogged loyalty to the British Raj to the haven of obstinate opposition.

This glorious example has another parallel in the chronicles of Indian National Congress. A similar influence was exerted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru over his father, Motilal Nehru, who swung from the shadows of British loyalty into the sunshine of British opposition.

V

These are not isolated cases in which staunch friends of Britain have found themselves obliged to become the bitterest foes of Britain.

The truth is that there is something seriously wrong with the British imperial

machinery which damages the British.

It is a pity that the British people do not remedy their imperial headache.

The British statesmen do not see that the British dependencies will be the solemn graveyards of the noblest British dreams.

But we have gone rather astray. Let us turn to the Frontier and the Frontier Gandhi again.

The British jail life has long ceased to be a new experience for Ghaffar Khan.

Off and on he has been behind the British bars. He has often seen the inside of the horrible British cells. By the British authorities he has sometimes been put in fetters as if he were a hardened criminal and not a mere political offender.

Being rather tall, his fetters were once rather small. Nevertheless he kept cheery and spread sunshine round him to the rayless hearts of depressed prisoners.

Since August, 1942, to March, 1945, the British authorities have kept him a close prisoner and have not allowed him to see the light of a free man.

India's greatest men are rotting in jails to muse the whims of our British rulers!

The Civil Disobedience in 1930 opened

a new chapter in the history of the Frontier Province.

The patient work of Khan Brothers bore fruit. The whole province lined up with the nationalist leaders.

The message of Mahatma Gandhi was drummed from the top of the houses.

The jails were packed. Thousands of prisoners were pouring every day like a regular stream. This was more than the British authorities could bear. They felt unduly unnerved. They saw the Frontier slipping out of their hands.

A national move on the border is too much for British sinews. A reign of terror soon followed.

The British guns opened their throats and sent shell into the crowds of innocent men. This tragic incident of Kissa-Khani firing and Pathan martyrdom is well known.

Peshawar Enquiry Committee was instituted by the Congress. It was presided over by the late Mr. Vithalbhai Patel. He resigned his chairmanship of the Indian Legislative Assembly before proceeding to Peshawar. The Report was proscribed by the Government. The British authorities

also banned several books that attempted to give an idea of the Report.

So when the British hog goes, it always goes the whole hog!

It was a strange spectacle during the Round Table Conference. It was a spectacle which only a British Imperialist is capable of manipulating in a mumbo-jumbo of political jugglery. Lord Irwin signed a pact with Mahatma Gandhi and packed him to London. Hardly had Mahatma Gandhi reached London, when Lord Irwin resumed the policy of repression. While Mahatma Gandhi was following the Goddess of Democracy up the staircase at St. James Palace, brothers, sisters, sons and nephews followed Abdul Ghaffar Khan to a British jail in the Frontier!

This was not a new or novel experience. The British statesmen have often behaved like this. Indian history is replete with British butcheries.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan is warmly attached to the interest of the masses. He is a radical with a tremendous faith in God. He believes that all religions are of equal inner value. He has pinned his faith in the quintessence of religion. His broad-minded-

ness has won him general respect. No wonder, he is one of the most important figures that the British feel afraid of.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is not going to play the communal game of the British ! If he would but be a communalist, John Bull would be prepared to allow him the largest tether.

The Frontier Gandhi has built up a powerful national movement. He has drawn the Frontier within the Congress orbit. He has successfully weaned the warlike Pathan from the path of violence.

He has given his people a new consciousness of life in a lifetime which the British withheld in a century of mis-government.

His life is a labour of love. He has brought huge Muslim mass support to back up the national demand.

He has created a powerful body of volunteers. Ghaffar Khan calls them *Khudai Khidmatgars*. It means the "Servants of God".

Are the British afraid of the Servants of God ? No, not in Britain !—but yes, in Frontier !

VI

Without rhyme and without reason, the Khudai Khidmatgars have filled the Frontier officials with nervousness.

The severest British repression is not able to break up the organisation. John Bull always attempts the impossible !

The British Government calls them Red Shirts. The British Imperialists do smart propaganda work. But only the shirts of the people are red. The ideas of the Khudai Khidmatgars are not coloured. And the British have nothing to be afraid of—except their own conscience ! They are servants of God in thought, word and deed. Even their shirts are not red. The shirts appear red only to British eyes ! The Frontier is too poor to afford dyes under the British regime.

The poor servants of God colour their shirts in brick-dust. Thus they season their skins for British flogging. The Red Shirts—of the red British terminology—are too patriotic to waste their hard-earned money on foreign dyes.

VII

Ghaffar Khan is a man of cool courage

and firm fortitude. Once in a British prison he learnt of the hunger-strike of his nephew. He did not attempt to meet his nephew. He did not dissuade him from his sacred crusade. It would have been unholy. The young man actually fasted for seventy-eight days. Thus he excelled Terrance MacSwiney, the Irish hunger-striker, who could not pass the ordeal successfully by a number of days.

When the life of his nephew became uncertain, Ghaffar Khan wrote a letter to the Government about the disposal of his body. Ironically enough, that is the only request a Pathan can make to John Bull!—a request which might hopefully be expected to be granted!

VIII

Abdul Ghaffar Khan is a man of conviction rather than that of words. Far from being an orator he rarely speaks. But the few words surging from the depth of his soul rarely fail to hit the nail on the head.

Abdul Ghaffar Khan has a striking appearance, a magnetic personality and an element of charm. Even the British cannot escape his charm!

Repeated imprisonments in the British

jails have worn his body but not his spirit. At one time he weighed over fifteen stones. At present his weight is just a little over eleven stones. The marks of suffering are writ large on his person.

The Pathans now very well understand the magic of democracy. What they do not understand is the Britisher's faith in it. They follow the leadership of Ghaffar Khan. He alone can teach them the true ideals of democracy, but the British, instead of appreciating his efforts, are continually putting a spoke in his wheel.

The British love-making with bullets and bombs followed by big sweetened words does not appeal to the tribal hearts. It can bring about no friendship between Britain and India. It only sows a dragon's teeth of discord. That is why the border and cis-border Pathans are ever ready to rise and drive the *Firinghee* beyond the Indus.

The dynamic qualities of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan can alone keep them within the tether of law and the doctrine of love.

It is a pity that the Britishers do not see the light of reason. They do not understand that Ghaffar Khan is really carrying on the British fight.

The Frontier Gandhi is doing a British officer's job.

Like Mahatma Gandhi he is the greatest friend of Britain and the most efficient policeman across the Indus. Yet the British do not understand !

IX

Next to the Frontier Gandhi, his brother Dr. Khan Sahib is the most selfless nationalist leader across the Indus.

If Ghaffar Khan is the soul of the Congress, Dr. Khan Sahib is its body and the principal directing head.

Also he is one of the most enthusiastic leaders and an exceedingly cultured man in the Frontier. He has been to England and studied at Edinburgh for his medical degree.

While Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan directs the Congress, Dr. Khan Sahib is its chief executive. No wonder, he has been piloting the destiny of the Frontier Ministry as its Premier.

His greatest claim to fame is not that he is the brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, although a British "Beaver" would like us to believe that.

True, he is a brother of one of the greatest men in the East and West ; but that ~~is~~ not his greatest claim to fame.

His greatest claim to fame is that he is the most selfless and the most fearless soldier in a national cause.

Mr. Beverley Nichols knows nothing of Dr. Khan Sahib because he knows nothing of selfless leaders in England.

The English people know nothing of Indian selflessness.

Even in this war India has suffered more than Great Britain.

India has paid in blood what England has paid in coins !

Since the British occupied India, India has borne the brunt of the British battles !

X

What the Khan Brothers are doing, actually England and Englishmen have taught them.

The truth is that there is a world of difference between the soul and body of the true Englishman ; the Britisher at home and the Britisher in India.

Power corrupts the man. At least it has corrupted the British bureaucracy !

Sir Stafford Cripps came to India with noble thoughts, but the men on the spot worked their magic on him.

The glittering bureaucracy pulled his strings.

He came as an independent man but he was no more independent when he went back.

He lost a golden opportunity of serving a noble cause and went back a disappointed man to rest his limbs on daffodils !

Such is the pernicious influence of British bureaucracy !

XI

The Pathan has learnt one lesson from the British bombs. He has realised the danger of attacking the British armies face, to face. His defeat in a pitched fight is as sure as death.

Every defeat means more roads into the heart of tribal territory. And he is mightily afraid of the British roads and the British policy of peaceful penetration.

It has compromised the wild freedom of the hills and brought the hill tribes into the clutches of the British—the British clutches of law !

With the moral support of the Congress, the Khan Brothers have been able to spread the national movement throughout the province. It involves a supreme effort of will for a Pathan to accept the doctrine of non-violence.

“Whatever the truth may be,” says Sir William Barton, “Abdul Ghaffar has succeeded in acquiring an outstanding influence throughout the province, a unique achievement since the beginning of British rule. It is due almost entirely to him that thousands of young Pathans, educated or illiterate, have been drawn into the vortex of the Indian political affairs under the Red Shirt banner.”

The Pathans, under the magnetic influence of the Khan Brothers, are giving up rifles, and taking up the innocent battledore of Indian politics—non-violence! Is this what the British statesmen fear the most in the Frontier?

It appears that the thick-skinned John Bull cannot appreciate even a prick to his stone-boiled conscience.

The Khan Brothers are law-abiding followers of the principle of non-violence as Mahatma Gandhi understands it. The

Servants of God cannot be the servants of the devil. They have never tried to embroil the tribes with the Government. The Khan Brothers have never tried to undermine the British position. Most of the firing has been entirely on the British side, since the Congress gripped its hold tight on the masses—the Pathan masses in the Frontier.

XII

The Red Shirts do not run counter to the British ideals. They help the British policy of peaceful penetration. They help to civilise the tribes.

The British officials need not be nervous if the Congress slogans are heard in the Afghan hills. The gospel of non-violence may one day exercise the magic appeal among the border folk.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan told an English journalist that if the British Government would supply him with the necessary funds, he would tame the border in five years by opening dispensaries and founding schools. But where the British have eyes to see and ears to hear?

The British find it easier to waste the Indian revenues on gun-powder rather than

on schoolchildren.

The future of the Frontier lies in the hands of the Red Shirts—rather than the British Government. The red in the Frontier signifies the martyrs rather than the tyrants. The tyrants may have red hands—with other peoples' blood; but their shirts are not *always* red, as the martyrs always have.

XIII

Only those who have really come in touch with the Frontier Gandhi know what an affectionate personality he is. To the masses in the Frontier he is veritably a god. To the Indians at large he is a second Gandhi. And Gandhi, as we know, is second to no personality that England has ever produced. No Englishman ever had such a hold on his people as Ghaffar Khan has on the hearts of his countrymen.

The followers of the Frontier Gandhi, the Khudai Khidmatgars, are the spearhead of political movement across the Indus. It is a body truly Islamic in thought, word and deed. They live simple and think high. They do not suffer from the black death of fanaticism, quite unlike the Muslim League.

The Khudai Khidmatgars are markedly Islamic, while the Muslim League is trademarkedly Islamic. The British, however, with their keen business nose, always give preference to a trade label. Yes, only a trade label, because that is the chief characteristic of the British goods—bad products with good labels !

The Red Shirts are not red in philosophy. On the contrary they have uprooted communism from the province. Chamarkand in Bejor once used to be a storm centre of communism. But since the territory has come under the influence of the Khan Brothers, nationalism has ousted communism from the province.

Thus the Khudai Khidmatgars have uprooted both communalism and communism from the Frontier. They have lit up the whole border from the Indus to the Durand Line with new ideals. The British Imperialists have never made any real effort to bring about a permanent solution of the Frontier problem. They have wasted their daylight in hunting and the candlelight in dancing, while the Khan Brothers are sweating their blood for the “crushed” masses of the Frontier—people

crushed economically but not in spirit !
They are dauntless fighters of freedom as
ever !

Dr. Khan Sahib told the Central
Assembly in March, 1939, that the border
tribes were uniting to establish a republic.
They would any moment if the British
Imperialists do not meddle with their
affairs !

CHAPTER EIGHT

Gentlemen of the British Press

“If a dog bites a man, it is not a news;” said an English lord, “but if a man bites a dog, it’s a news!”

That is what the British press, and its honourable gentlemen, are always busy at, day and night, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and fifty-two weeks a year.

One is not two hours in Britain, before he feels that the British public is suffering from lively giddiness of the news. The British men are news-mad. So are the British women.

The gentlemen of the British press are perhaps the funniest and the frenziest specimens of humanity the world over. They are prepared to do the silliest things, that a man from Asia can ever dream of, for a petty freakish news.

Suppose, a Britisher bites a dog. That is not possible in India but not impossible in Britain, otherwise a British lord would

not have given me the illustration. Besides, in the circulatory heat of British civilisation, it is natural to expect that here and there a son of the Mother of Parliaments should lose his head. No, it is quite certain, because I have personally seen the Britishers losing their heads—many times a day in India!

Then let us suppose that a member of Parliament in London loses his head. Having lost his head, it is natural that he should bite a dog, because sheer British culture prevents him from biting another member of Parliament, although he would very much like to! But he bites a dog—usually an Indian dog—to let off his steam.

It is *natural* that a gentleman of the British press should be standing, when a member of the British Parliament bites a dog. If—unfortunately for the press—no reporter is at hand, then ten to one the British Parliament would tear the Magna Charta and deprive the press of its liberty, because the labours of an honourable member have gone to waste.

The gentlemen of the British press have to be always on their feet. No wonder, in London they sleep with their boots on!

They run from place to place with cameras on their chests and typewriters on their backs ! They dine with a telephone in their hands ; and sometimes they employ a pretty nurse to put morsels in their mouths, while the “ efficient ” reporters are using telephones and typewriters at the same time. During war the British reporters have learnt to type with their toes (it’s no joke !) so that they can give better work—for better pay.

In India journalism is patriotism. For years many Indian journalists work without reward. Indian journalists are patriots and Indian patriots are journalists. Such a thing is undreamable in Britain !

The — British journalists are money-makers first. And everything else afterwards ! It is money that makes the press mare go in Britain. The Indian press lives on patriotism, the British press on gold reserves. The Indian journalist works on empty stomach and under conditions that will give a British journalist headache. The Indian gentleman of the press gets irregular pay at irregular intervals. If the British gentleman of the press were forced to do this, he will throw his fountain-pen, camera,

typewriter and the scraps of paper into the gutter Thames !—and fly to the forest !

Yet the fact remains, if the gentlemen of the British press will not cover a man-bites-the-dog news, they will lose their pay—and prestige !

Also from the angle of the British cannibal it is vitally important that the press crowd should be present before he sets out to perform his experiment in cannibalism, otherwise what is the use of a member of Parliament undergoing all this inhuman humiliation ?

And in Great Britain, every Mr. Bear and every Mr. Beaver is prepared to bend down on his knees and undergo any humiliation if a gentleman of the press is present to watch his acrobatics, because in England things have value only on account of the momentum of publicity they command.

Great Britain knows no intrinsic value ! Great Britain knows no face value ! Great Britain knows only the “ publicity-value ” of a petty bit of news—good, bad or indifferent. The great people of the Great Britain have their being in sensation. They live and die in sensation.

Consequently, it is customary for a

member of the British Parliament not to bite a dog unless he has sent three rounds of invitations to the journalists. And the journalists are prepared to pay a thousand pounds each as admittance fee for cannibal shows. Every newspaper proprietor is prepared to pay ten thousand pounds as admittance fee if a British member of the British Parliament will spare the British dog and try his canine teeth on a member of the Indian National Congress !

Sensationalism is the be-all and end-all of British journalism. The gentlemen of the British press are paid not for the news but for the sensations they "find" for their papers.

Yes, the British journalists must get, find, steal or cook thrills for the readers, otherwise their paper will sink and the entire staff go down to the bottom.

II

Mahatma Gandhi arrived at the Round Table Conference.

"Mr. Gandhi," said the Fleet Street, "is the best *news value* in the world, *always* excepting of course the Prince of Wales."

News value, always !

Now Kingsley Hall was going to be given its chance to reap some of the golden harvest.

Distinguished gentlemen of the British press called on Miss Lester. They had never cared to give her an eye before. But now they made serious business proposals.

Miss Muriel Lester could share with their firm "half the profits accruing from sole press rights in Mr. Gandhi's visit!"

Mr. Gandhi would blink at that. And so did Miss Lester.

Easy money would have dazzled the eyes of a man like Mr. Beverley Nichols. He would have taken the opportunity by forelock and grasped the offer with both hands. No wonder, the gentleman of the British press is a prosperous man. He knows how to "mine" news and to market them.

A continuous stream of callers began to storm Kingsley Hall. There were film people, gramophone companies, a fleet of photographers, while Mahatma Gandhi was yet at Marseilles!

Miss Lester was tracked by wire, phone, and followed by British news-mongers far down into the depths of the country.

One press gentleman dogged her determinedly. He begged a few words of introduction that he might present to "Mr. Gandhi" on his landing at Marseilles. He had booked his passage there already! If Miss Lester would do that thing, she would receive £100 for a scrap of note-paper!

"But how can I sell my guest?" enquired Miss Lester.

This ethics the gentleman of the British press can never reach at. He is rather weak at that. A British news-monger has naturally no moral scruples. It took hours to convince the reporter of the business immorality that lay behind his offer.

"Well, Miss Lester," he said at last, "if you will do your best for us to interest Mr. Gandhi in this business proposition of ours, promise or no promise, and whether you fail or succeed, my firm will give your Hall £100."

The wonderful offer did not materialise! No doubt the British journalists can always be dishonest.

Honesty is only a British trademark.

Miss Lester's interviews with British journalists proved a great fun. She found

it impossible to get across some philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi to the British public.

The British press is as ignorant as a bat about India.

Miss Lester found it impossible to develop among the gentlemen of the British press some insight into the Indian situation. Many of them could not spell correctly even the name of Mahatma Gandhi.

Films were made of Kingsley Hall on three different occasions. The luggage brought by the movietone people intrigued the poor inmates greatly. It was a thrilling experience for the unemployed members of the household.

But then !

They took a picture of two men, squatting on the floor, polishing brass jugs and bowls for the altar. Good !

Forthwith they interpreted the scene, saying :

“ Here are some of Miss Lester’s helpers preparing for Mr. Gandhi’s arrival ! ”

Bravo, British press ! Indian press photographers have a better conscience.

“ Despite the spate of eager gentlemen,” writes Miss Muriel Lester, “ each competing for my exclusive attention, for my ear, for

my words, for my knowledge of Mr. Gandhi, very little seemed to appear in the columns of their respective papers except irrelevancies. The articles were long enough; paper, not to be measured by inches but by the foot, was covered with accounts of chats between the journalists and me, but I looked in vain for any information about my guest or India. Most of that was written about him was trivial—pastry cook's ware rather than good solid food. The British public read assiduously half a column or so about Mr. Gandhi and still knew nothing."

Well done, British press !

An East Ender summed up the situation thus :

"The papers have been publishing something almost every day about Mr. Gandhi for months, but they have not told us anything about him yet except that he wears a loin-cloth and drinks goat's milk."

No wonder the gentlemen of the British press completely distorted even these two facts. They deliberately misled the British public.

Truth referred to Mahatma Gandhi as

a "Humbug".

If this is truth, God save us from the British truth !

Truth seems to be a very unwelcome guest in the British journalistic sanctum. Even the most reputed British journalists love to 'embroider' truth.

The gentleman of the British press is handsomely paid for falsehood, distortion, misrepresentation, and political black-mailing.

III

The representative of the *Daily Mail* interviewed Gandhiji on board the *Rajputana*.

He sent off telegrams to his newspaper most mischievously misrepresenting what Gandhiji had said.

"Mr. Gandhi propagated hatred of British rule !"

Gandhiji got hold of the British propaganda-monger in the special train taking him to Boulogne from Marseilles. He gave his friend a stern lecture.

"I was surprised," said the Britisher, "that you brought in politics !"

"You must understand," said Gandhiji, "that I cannot isolate politics from the

deepest things of my life, for the simple reason that my politics are not corrupt; they are inextricably bound up with non-violence and truth. As I have said often enough, I would far rather that India perished than that she won her freedom at the sacrifice of truth."

Quite on the contrary a British journalist is always ready to sacrifice his truth for a little more salt of sensationalism.

Again the *Daily Mail* friend reported :

"Gandhiji was disappointed at the poor reception !"

"How did you know," asked Gandhiji, "that I was disappointed at the poor reception ?"

"Amusement perhaps meant disappointment," said the reporter.

Is this the standard of journalism in England which Mr. Beverley Nichols so much boasts of ?

IV

Mr. Slocombe drew upon his imagination in the *Evening Standard*.

He represented Mahatma Gandhi as prostrating himself before the Prince of Wales when he came to India !

“Well, Mr. Slocombe,” said Gandhijī, “I should have expected you to know better. This does not do credit to your imagination even. I would bend the knees before the poorest scavenger, the poorest untouchable in India, for having participated in crushing him for centuries; I would even take the dust off his feet. But I would not prostrate myself even before the King, much less before the Prince of Wales.”

V

Our friend, Mr. Beverley Nichols, is the **BEST** specimen of a giddy, crazily untruthful and sensation-ridden British journalist.

His book *Verdict on India* is the **BEST** example of wilfully mischievous, sugar-coated, appealingly ‘embroidered’ half-truths.

And what value can be attached to his ideas may **BEST** be left to the *idea* of the reader!

CHAPTER NINE

Fascist Britain

Britain is democrat where it cannot be fascist.

Britain has a queer liking for use of force. She rules by thumb wherever she can rule by thumb. Britain chooses not to be fascist only where the rule of the thumb is not applicable. And, of course, the rule of the thumb is not applicable when force meets with greater force.

Britain is democrat by convenience,—at convenience,—and, of course, for convenience. Democracy is the handmaid of Great Britain. As a frightened child in the dark rushes into the arms of his nurse, so does Britain. The frightened Britain rushes into the arms of Democracy.

On weaker nations Great Britain has never stopped short of using the maximum force, a ceaseless flinging in and out of the military hammer, until a sheer physical exhaustion prevented Britain from any

further exercise of muscular strength. Ireland is the oldest example. India is comparatively modern—only two hundred years. Greece is the latest—only a couple of months.

If John Bull chose to trample India with his left heel, it is because the right heel of London has always been on the life and liver of Ireland. But Greece, poor fellow ! It was crushed with both the heels of Mr. Winston Churchill.

Like India, China, Greece and Egypt, the Irish people have a golden history ; but unluckily all the five ancient civilisations possess a very dirty record of British dictatorship and domineering.

What Ireland has suffered yesterday at the hands of the Fascist Britain, India is experiencing today—a thousand times worse.

The recent Bengal famine and pestilence has literally brayed the multitudes of India in a mortar. Millions of brave souls have been skinned and skeletoned. Vultures have eaten their intestines before the palatial British offices in Calcutta—British Empire's second city !

All this happened when India's greatest

and most beloved leaders were locked up behind prison bars.

Nobody cared. Britain could not help it.

Fascist Britain lost her temper over the "Quit India" Resolution of the Indian National Congress in August, 1942. Indian blood fed the British guns. Indian youth and manhood filled the British jails.

Need we dig out the skeletons of British fascism out of the graves of Indian history? There is the Jallianwala Bagh. There is the Indian Mutiny. There are many Jallianwala Baghs and many Indian Mutinies in which Britain broke the fly upon the wheel.

II

A scene from the Indian Mutiny.

"All the city people found within the walls when our troops entered," records Montgomery Martin, "were bayoneted on the spot; and the number was considerable, as you may suppose when I tell you that in some houses forty and fifty persons were hiding. These were not mutineers, but residents of the city, who trusted to our well-known mild rule for pardon. I am glad

to say they were disappointed."

Bayonnetted? Fifty men in every house? India's capital? Fifty men in thousands of houses? Millions of men? All bayonnetted? "These were not mutineers"? These were residents of the city. Trusted to "well-known mild rule for pardon" of British Fascists? "I am glad"? .

None but a fascist could do this. And none but a fascist could be glad on having seen this.

Lest Montgomery Martin tells a tale, there is Holmes to bear testimony:

"Harmless citizens were shot clasping their hands for mercy. Trembling old men were cut down The people of Delhi had expiated, many times over, the crimes of the mutineers. Tens of thousands of men and women and children were wandering for no crime homeless over the country. What they had left behind was lost to them for ever; for the soldiers, going from house to house and from street to street, ferreted out every article of value, and smashed to pieces whatever they could not carry away."

Harmless citizens shot? Clasping their

hands for mercy? Old men cut down?
Tens of thousands of men and women and
children wandering homeless for no crime?
Every article of value smashed to pieces?

*No wonder, Fascist Britain has been
doing in India what Fascist Japan has done
in China.*

Jesus, protect India!

III

Mr. M. A. Jinnah—Beverley Nichols's
“most important man in Asia”—has
declared in the clearest terms:

*“Whatever you might say the
present united India is not
held by us but by machine-
guns.”*

The British are trying to prolong and
continue their overlordship over the entire
sub-continent of India!

The British Fascists, said Mr. Jinnah,
on January 15, 1945, are playing the role of
arbitrators so that they can “lay down
the law of justice which the monkey
dispensed to the two cats.”

Only a Fascist Government can be
responsible for the political tragedy in
India.

Mr. Panderel Moon, recently a leading official in the Indian Civil Service, makes magnificently sincere remarks in his latest book *Future of India* published recently in London.

“By hook or crook,” says Mr. Moon, “British rule must be brought to an end . . . India, like the whole of Asia, is on the march. We in Britain can help her or hinder her, but we cannot stop her.”

Does Fascist Britain listen? Do fascists have ears?

Fascist Britain has struggled through to an understanding with the United States, and what is more satisfactory, with Russia.

“Is Britain,” says Sir M. Zaffrullah emphatically, “content to accept defeat only in the case of India?”

“Statesmen of the Commonwealth!” he said in the Commonwealth Relations Conference, “does it not strike you as an irony of the first magnitude that India should have two and a half million men in the field fighting and struggling to preserve the liberty of the nations of the Commonwealth and yet should be a suppliant for her own freedom?”

British fascism is in itself an irony of the first magnitude.

Mr. Sumner Wells in his book *Intelligent Americans' Guide to Peace* has praised India's "devotion to peace".

What does Britain care for India's devotion to peace?

"Free India taking her place beside a free strong China," says Mr. Sumner Wells, "is bound to revolutionise Asia."

Revolution in Asia! That is exactly what Fascist Britain is out to stop.

CHAPTER TEN

The Iron Dictator

Who is the dictator? The naked Mahatma Gandhi?—or the iron-clad Clement Attlee? The Patriot Patel?—or the British Bull Bevin?

And which is the fascist organisation? The armless Indian National Congress?—or the armed Labour Party of Britain?

And who obeys the slightest crack of the fascist whip? The super-paid author of *Verdict on India*?—or the toiling and turmoiling writer of *The Iron Dictator*?

These are significant questions, because Beverley Nichols has the cheek to call Mahatma Gandhi a dictator and the Congress a fascist organisation under the iron heels of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel! Who had ever before heard of this novel news?

“It is a Gandhi dictatorship,” says Mr. Nichols. “So many examples might be quoted in proof of this assertion that

it is difficult to choose the most telling.”

So many examples might be quoted in proof of this assertion that Mr. Nichols has not quoted any example at all ! He finds it *so difficult to choose the most telling* that he has failed to choose any !

The lynx-eyed self-styled Chief Justice Hon'ble Mr. Beverley Nichols of Fogland passed his verdict on India overnight and set out in the morning to hunt out evidence in support of his judgment.

II

And in his mad endeavour to cook something, somehow, somewhere, the British vulture landed on the carrion of Hiralal's *Iron Dictator* instead of the fine flesh of Gandhiji's *Experiments with Truth*, Nehru's *Autobiography*, Subhas's *Indian Struggle*, or even the speeches and writings of Mohammed Ali Jinnah !

A vulture prefers a dead body to the fine fresh flesh, while what a lion prefers is just otherwise. In cooking a literary meal for his readers, Mr. Nichols has behaved like a British vulture rather than like a British lion. Not only that. A devil can quote any bible for his purpose. And

fascism can be extracted out of the best books. Even the utterances of Jesus Christ can be squeezed to give out fascism

But what is this *Iron Dictator* which the author of *Verdict on India* treasured in his bosom and carried all the way from Lahore to London?

"Before me is a book called *The Iron Dictator*," says Mr. Nichols. What a dazzling limelight can a British "Beaver" give to an obscure pamphlet! A devil would have done better. He could easily have proved British fascism out of the greatest British books. "Before me is a book called the *British Constitution*," says the Satan.

"On the dust-cover is a melodramatic drawing of a ferocious man," says Nichols, "twisted into a sort of grimace that Mussolini used to affect when he was braying for the moon. The face is a portrait, and a very good one, of the book's subject, Sardar Patel."

The face is no doubt a portrait of Sardar Patel. But it is certainly not a good one. Has Nichols met Sardar Patel? Has he seen him? Is it a monopoly of the British authors to talk out of their hats?

Long before *The Iron Dictator*

had seen the light of the day, the publisher of this book had warned the publisher of that unfortunate book that the portrait was a misrepresenting one. And had the advice been heeded, wind would have been taken out of the sails of the British mischief-monger.

If the face of the Patriot Patel is ferocious, the legless inhumanity of British imperialism is alone responsible for it. If he twists his face into a sort of grimace, the British attitude of headless indifference has given him ample reason for that. And Sardar Patel does not bray for the moon. Sardar Patel shouts for the "earth" of India.. We cannot bray for the moon, like the British, when we have no earth to stand upon. Having no earth under our feet, we can only look down upon our British masters. Let them quit India, and give us our piece of earth, we shall look the British up to the moon, and give them the peace of heaven.

III

Sardar Patel is certainly not the chief party boss of the Congress. John Gunther—the author of *Inside Asia*—who called Sardar

Patel the "Congress's Jim Farley, the ruthless party fixer and organiser"—told a great lie. Hiralal—the author of *The Iron Dictator*—who "proudly quoted" John Gunther—told a greater lie. And the greatest lie was told by Beverley Nichols—the author of *Verdict on India*—who deliberately and dangerously repeated the howl. Falsehood does not become truth by constant repetition.

Commercialism rather than nationalism is the spirit that lies behind the production of *The Iron Dictator*. And commercially well it has served Mr. Nichols's purpose, because sensationalism rather than sense of justice is the farce that lies behind *Verdict on India*.

IV

"*The Iron Dictator*," says Mr. Beverley Nichols, "has had a very wide sale in India; you see it nearly on every bookstall. It has frequently been recommended to me by the Congress enthusiasts; it may be fairly taken as representing the average Congress mentality in the same way that Rosenberg's theories are representative of the Nazi 'philosophy'."

This statement is a surprise to the author of *The Iron Dictator*, a shock to the Wheeler's Bookstalls, a thunderbolt to the members of the Indian National Congress. The Congress enthusiasts have recommended a book to Beverley Nichols which they either did not hear of or did not think it worthy of being read by themselves !

For what is the net sale of *The Iron Dictator* in India ? On the very face of it, only three editions have been published in two years. And the publisher has told me that an edition of this book consists of a thousand copies. So three thousand copies have been published for the population of 400,000,000 ! And have those copies been sold ? You see them lying "nearly on every bookstall" ! In fact, it is a common maxim with the publishers that when a book lies on the bookstalls, it is a sure proof of the fact that the book is not popular. Good books sell like hot cakes. Bad books rot on the bookstalls like carrion until the British vultures pick them up. And if the vulture thinks that the carrion is very tasty, we must bid farewell to the vulture's taste !

V

And is Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel an "Iron Dictator"? Is he the "party boss"? Is he the "Jim Farley"? Is he "the ruthless party fixer"? Is Patel "the creator of the Congress political machine"? Does he look "like a Roman Emperor"? Does Patel lack Nehru's "grace and intellectual precision"? Has he "no vision beyond the immediate task"? Has Patel no "religious impulses"? Has he never read "the Hindu scriptures till last year"? Is Sardar Patel "Gandhi's Greatest General"?

These are serious allegations put forward through John Gunther-Hiralal Seth-Beverley Nichols conspiracy. And it is sacrilegious to invent these blasphemies against a patriot who is a true follower of Mahatma Gandhi and the greatest servant of humanity!

No doubt, now and then, Sardar Patel has wielded a strong hand in the Congress. But that was to purge it of undesirable elements. And to translate the ideas of Gandhiji into action. Consequently it was for the good of the country.

He may be described as Gandhi's

general," says Hiralal, "though he has not always found it possible to accept all the shibboleths of non-violence."

If Sardar Patel did not accept non-violence firmly as his creed, then how did he happen to be "Gandhi's Greatest General"? Or should we presume that all along Sardar Patel has been playing ducks and drakes with Mahatma Gandhi? If we accept Mr. Hiralal's formula—as exhibited in the preface to *The Iron Dictator*—it will land us into round-the-clock complications. Instead of fixing deception on Mahatma Gandhi, it will be easier and more correct to assume that the judgment of Hiralal is wrong. And if Hiralal goes wrong, Mr. Nichols, who stands on borrowed stilts, cannot go right.

VI

Gujarat is the birthplace of Patel as well as Gandhi. And no doubt they understand each other better than the authors of *The Iron Dictator* and *Verdict on India*. Gandhi and Patel have long worked together. If Patel is a dictator, Gandhiji cannot be the apostle of non-violence. And if we agree that Gandhiji is not a dictator,

surely Patel is not a dictator too. Consequently, Mr. Nichols stands upon sandy foundations. And he should have known—since he stayed in India for a year and claims to know all about India—that *The Iron Dictator* is all sand. India is not the land of dictators, but of sincere servants of civilisation.

VII

“Two groups were formed at Gaya—one under C. R. Das and the Elder Nehru favouring council-entry and the other of no-changers, who wished to follow Gandhian programme. This group was led by Rajagopalachariar and Vallabhbhai Patel... Patel, Rajaji and other Gandhites resigned from the Working Committee. The resignations were accepted and the Working Committee was reconstituted. The President also resigned.”

Does this smack of dictatorship, Mr. Nichols?

VIII

“Tell Government,” said Sardar Patel to the peasants in a no-tax campaign, “you can do what you like, but only by

force you shall get us to agree to what we do not like. Cut me to pieces but I will not pay."

And the British Government did cut the peasants to pieces !

"The peasants of Bardoli acted on this advice," says Hiralal. "They suffered hardships and privations, but they did not yield. The Government employed Pathans to harass them and force them to pay, who indulged in all sorts of indecencies against them. This use of Pathans has a marked resemblance to the Jew-baiting of S.S. and Gestapo in Germany. It would be no exaggeration to say that the life of Bardoli peasant was hardly different from that of a Jew in a Ghetto in Berlin or Warsaw in our times."

How does Mr. Nichols relish this quotation from *The Iron Dictator*? And who was acting dictatorially in Gujarat? The Governor of Bombay or Sardar Patel? And which is the fascist organisation—British bureaucracy or the Indian National Congress?

IX

The arrest of Sardar Patel electrified

Gujarat. Seventy-five thousand people gathered on the sands of Sabarmati. And they passed the following resolution :

“ We, the citizens of Ahmedabad, determine hereby that we shall go the same path where Vallabhbhai has gone . . . ”

People always follow the dictators to palaces, thrones, and victories ; but have the people ever followed a dictator to prison ? That honour is reserved for the greatest patriots, Mr. Nichols !

X

“ I know,” said Sardar Patel to the peasants, “ some of you are afraid of your lands being confiscated. What is confiscation ? Will they take away the lands to England ? ” And yet that is exactly what the British Bulls have been doing in India for the last two centuries ! They have been skinning Indian peasants to dress up English gentlemen.

XI

“ Every home,” said Patel, “ must now be a Congress office and every soul a Congress organisation.”

Are these the ways of dictators ? Can

‘this be the ideal of a Nazi regime? Has Britain ever acquired that high sense of democracy inculcated by Gandhi’s Greatest General?

XII

“I am not interested in loaves and fishes of office or legislative honours,” said Sardar Patel. “The peasantry do not understand them That which does not satisfy them is no Swaraj . . . But let us make up our minds that we exist for them, not they for us.”

Can Clement Attlee, the leader of the Labour Government, surpass Sardar Patel’s love for the labourers?

XIII

Mr. Nichols believes that Muslims are under the iron heel of the Hindus. And yet he blinked over the following offer of Sardar Patel in *The Iron Dictator* :

“As a Hindu I would adopt my predecessor’s formula and present the Muslims with a Swadeshi fountain-pen and let them write out their demands. And I shall endorse them.”

Does this smack of General MacArthur

or the Japanese Surrender Commission ?

XIV

“I am a blind follower of Gandhi,” says Sardar Patel. A blind follower of Mahatma Gandhi cannot be a dictator. Much less an Iron Dictator !

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Most Important Man in Asia

Mr. Beverley Nichols has the impudence to tingle the vanity of Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the Quisling of India, by calling him as "the most important man in Asia".

That Mahatma Gandhi is the greatest enemy of untouchables, is one verdict of Mr. Beverley Nichols. And that Mr. Jinnah is the most important man in Asia, is another. And the first is as absurd as the second.

II

"India," says Nichols, "is likely to be the world's greatest problem for some years to come, and Mr. Jinnah is in a position of unique strategic importance. He can sway the battle this way or that, as he chooses."

Surely, then, Jinnah is the most important man in the world! Stalin and Truman and Attlee and Makado and Chiang-

Kai-Shek pale into insignificance before him.

III

Should Mr. Jinnah be once reasonable in his lifetime, the British cannot stay in India for another day. Negatively indeed he has played the most important role in Indian politics. In a way, he can be held responsible for the subjection of Asia. From the British point of view there is no doubt that he is the most important man East of Suez. And that is why the British Government allowed the whole Simla Conference to founder on the rock of one man's obstinacy.

Out goes Jinnah, out goes communalism.

Out goes communalism, in comes freedom.

If freedom comes, out goes India of the British Empire.

If India goes out, what remains in the British Empire? The whole Asia will explode like a magazine. And if Asia goes, where remains the white man's burden? The whole European civilisation is imperilled.

No wonder, the whole structure of the British Empire hangs precariously by the grey silk-cord of that Jinnah's monocle !

IV

Mr. Jinnah is playing the Britisher's part in India, and hence he is the most important man in Asia. Where the Union Jack waves supreme, importance is cheap and chessy. You can knock down the citadels, if you would only play the king's game. Importance comes as easily as leaves to a man if he is prepared to stand as a pillar and prop up the Beauteous Britannia. Self-sacrifice is the price of national freedom. Self-importance is the sale of it.

What matter of pride it is if Jinnah is the most important man in Asia, when Jinnah's motherland is sunk in subjection and stands at the bottom of the Asiatic ladder ? Personal importance has no value in terms of international currency. The individual may die so that the nation may live.

V

It is sad that a man of Mr. Jinnah's calibre should have allowed himself to

become the nightmare of Indian politics. Made in England, a barrister-at-law of course, Mr. Jinnah has been the greatest stumbling-block in the road of freedom. Instead of embalming the wounds of our motherland, he has done much to embitter Hindu-Muslim relations at the behest of our white slave-owners. A house divided against itself cannot stand. And Mr. Jinnah is responsible for much of our woeful division. He has allowed himself to become a puppet of the British. And hence his importance in Asia is very far from being enviable.

VI

For long has Mr. Jinnah sailed under Congress colours. But soon he drifted away on the waves of opportunism. He played an unbecoming part in the tide of the times. And he allowed himself to be elected in 1910 on the communal ticket. Thus he knocked the bottom out of his pretensions as a nationalist. Previously, he used to cruise the social spheres of Bombay in a fancy boat. Now that boat touched the bottom. And Mr. Jinnah was left standing firmly on the *terra firma* of

communalism. He cast off the communal cloak. And back he was shepherded into the orthodox fold of Islam. Soon he fortified himself in the confidence of his community.

It is the sorriest chapter in the golden pages of the Indian history that Jinnah has used his driving force in strengthening chains of slavery rather than working for liberation from foreign yoke. Mr. Jinnah has won many a meed of communal laurels from the hearts of easily-won simple Muslim folk. But he has always kept two strings to his bow. And his greatest honour consists in daily, duly and doggedly associating himself with the fortification of the British stronghold in Asia. No wonder, such a personality very well deserves the superlative admiration of such a henchman of British imperialism as Beverley Nichols.

VII

Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Jinnah has never ceased to relish the pleasures of being elected to the dummy parliament in New Delhi. It is just because he knows which side his bread is buttered, and having known it once, he cannot help

chewing it, even though it has become **dry**, stale and wooden. It is strange that "**the most important man in Asia**" should succumb to the temptation of representing only a slice of territory in the screws and gadgets of the British bureaucracy.

Mr. Jinnah is the personification of communalism. And he is a staying power to be wrestled with. Thanks to Mr. Jinnah, imperialism has deeply embedded itself in the ribs of nationalism.

All that Mr. Jinnah wants is self-glorification. Not that he is, but that he wants to be the most important man in Asia. At any time he would succumb to the Congress if he can add more glory to his already dwindling stock of self-importance.

VIII

Mr. Jinnah knows the psychological magnetism of opposition. His motto is the maxim of Byron. "I am for the opposition," he might well say.

Mr. Jinnah is a mighty opportunist. His political sagacity possesses the backbone of patriotic statesmanship. For him is the spineless easy-chair politics. It has but one

strong vertebra. And that is intended to cause communal rift in the steady flow of nationalism. Daring not to tread the thorny road of death-defying self-sacrifice, he reaps another harvest of self-glorification. He cries halt to patriots. He clenches his teeth in mighty indignation. He plays himself up and others down. And that is his mighty pathological way. And that is exactly what makes him the most important man in Asia !

IX

Mr. Jinnah has a heart fired with great ambition. A lust for power clouds his intellect. Day by day he has been driving headlong to rank communalism. Once he was supposed to be the glorious herald of unity. Now he has brought forth the two-nation theory like a juggler out of his hat. With his ruthless saw he is trying to chop off the Muslim branch on which he is sitting from the Hindu stock rooted deep in its native soil. He has done more to bolster up the British imperialism on our hearths and homes than anybody else.

The glorious ambassador of unity has become the well-advertised prophet of

Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah is not even employing himself to advertise Pakistan. He is rather employing Pakistan to advertise himself. He loves self-advertisement. And Pakistan is his magnificent instrument of propaganda in that direction.

X

Even Mr. Jinnah admits that Hindu-Muslim disputes have been a terrible monster on the highway of nationalism. And he is pleased to engineer them ! Blowing hot and cold is a special quality of the Pakistanists. They welcome demon of communalism if it promises more fishes and loaves. Whenever and wherever unity of India is on the anvil, they raise a banner of revolt. And being thoroughly communalised, they stick to their guns and fight a pitched battle, yielding not an inch of Pakistan to anybody of nationalistic complex, although the imperialists may run over the whole territory.

Mr. Jinnah, the once ultra-nationalist disciple of Gokhale, persuaded Sir Fazl-i-Husain, the stone-boiled communalist, to give his Unionist Party a communal label ! Isn't that curious ? Truth is stranger than

fiction. The fact is, while Mr. Jinnah began to grope in the dark, Sir Fazl-i-Husain was groping out of it!

XI

Mr. Jinnah has never been in a mood to undergo self-sacrifice. No sacrifice in a Muslim cause. No sacrifice in anybody's cause! His is the safe politics of offending those who cannot offend. When there is a political storm, off goes Mr. Jinnah with his train of fairy followers. He flies from the political arena like mist before the breeze. This happened when the Khilafat hurricane was raging. The Jinnahites cannot offer a heavy toll of blood and tears. They return pit-a-pat when the storm has blown over. And then the work nearest to their heart is to sow dragon's teeth in the path of nationalists who stood firm and faced the fury of the firmaments, when the Jinnahites were resting their weary limbs on beds of asphodel.

XII

Mr. Jinnah depends on the fineness of diplomacy. He has a boundless capacity for wriggling himself out of a difficult

position. This happened when the Government of India did suppress the letter which Mr. Jinnah said no power could suppress. The truth is that Jinnah is the pet child of British bureaucracy. And his sabre-rattling is merely a bellicose gesture of a spirited boy. And when he gets a kick from bureaucracy, he just lets off steam by bullying his own countrymen.

This Jinnah-British alliance has often culminated in ugly events. It led to the dismissal of late Mr. Allah Bux. It forced a resignation on Mr. Fazlul Haq. It was responsible for the spoon-fed enthronement of League ministries in four provinces. It shipwrecked the Simla Conference. It bungled badly and failed to cope with the Bengal Famine.

The struggle against imperialism is inextricably intertwined with the struggle against communalism. The Congress desire for unity is good. But the Congress desire for unity at any cost is bad. When the demand increases, the price goes up. And Mr. Jinnah knows how to drive a hard bargain. We cannot get rid of the Britishers by fondling with the Leaguers.

Gandhiji has been to Mr. Jinnah what

Mr. Chamberlain has been to Herr Hitler. The ghost of Muslim League will perpetually haunt us until the British fade out of the picture. While John Bull thrives, John Communalism cannot die.

Britain wants the world to know that India is infested with tapeworms and tadpoles, and that a strong iron-gloved British hand alone can perform the "white man's burden".

XIII

Janeb Jinnah aspires to become the Fuehrer of Muslim India on the shoulders of the Congress. In his desperate bid for that exalted position, he is ever ready to engage himself in tangled web of British bureaucracy. So long as the British divide-and-rule policy persists, Mr. Jinnah is bound to remain magnetic man of the moment.

The League leader can be dislodged by total neglect of the British—or by total neglect from the Congress. He knows that. And consequently like an ailing child he draws all the attention towards himself with wolfish appetite. He gnaws into marrow and veins of India, chewing blood

and bones all along the line.

Only a total black-out in the national press can kill Janeb Jinnah, the Tin-God of the Malabar Hill, the Greatest Political Self-advertiser and the Most Important Man in Asia !

CHAPTER TWELVE

“Quit India” Justified

“Two out of every ten Englishmen gain their living, directly or indirectly, from the Indian connection.”

—*Verdict on India*, p. 250

That is a great reason, Mr. Nichols, even if no greater were forthcoming, but the Indian National Congress has the greatest reasons in its archives, why Britain *must* quit India, and quit it post-haste. As a matter of fact not two out of every ten Englishmen are fed by India, but rather two out of every ten are not fed upon us. In a more mathematical language, eight out of every ten are parasites upon us. And he who runs may read the causes of prosperity in Britain since the Industrial Revolution. It is now an acknowledged fact by economists the world over that it was the exploitation of Indian cash and credit that made the Industrial Revolution feasible in England. All the gold that floats in England

has been dug out of Indian hoards by the high-handedness of such Viceroys as Lord Hastings.

And it was the massacre of the Bengal industries that gave life and liver to cotton mills in Liverpool and Lancashire. And even if, for supposition's sake, two out of every ten Englishmen gain their living, directly or indirectly, from the Indian connection, what moral or material right has Mr. and Mrs. Smith to fatten themselves on the skeletons of Bengal?

"I cannot tell you," declared Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the International Congress against Imperialism held at Brussels in February, 1927, "the whole history of Indian exploitation—how India is maltreated, repressed and plundered. It is a long and very sad story. . . . Even the British historians who are certainly not impartial admit that the early history of India under British rule represents an epoch of predatory war—a period in which free-booters prowled about and committed plunders and robberies in the land in an unbridled manner. You know perhaps also of the event which is known as the Sepoy Mutiny and which took place seventy years ago. It is called so, but

if fate had willed otherwise and the so-called rebels had been crowned with success, then today it would have been called the Indian War of Independence.”

Should Britain quit India, Mr. Nichols?

Yes, Mr. Nichols, Britain must quit India.

II

“ *Can* we quit? ” says Beverley Nichols. “ This is largely a physical question, involving considerations of defence.”

There is no use harping on the problem of defence, Mr. Nichols. If Indian soldiers can defend the British Empire, they can certainly defend their homelands. The Indian soldiers have fought on all fronts in Europe, Egypt, Palestine, Iran, Burma, Siam, China and Indo-China. What they have accomplished as mercenaries is nothing as compared with what they can accomplish as soldiers of freedom. Trained under nationalist generals they can beat the finest armies in the world. The exploits of the Indian National Army, built out of the staunchest pro-British elements, show the fire of freedom that burns in every Indian's breast. And this fire is hot enough to burn all differ-

ences of caste, creed and colour which have captivated the imagination of the apologists of the British Empire, like Mr. Beverley Nichols.

“You and your gallant soldiers have been exploited enough in the past,” said Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at the Punjab Provincial Conference held on April 11, 1928, “not in India only, but in the four quarters of the world. Even today they are made to do the dirty work of British imperialism in China, in Persia, and in Mesopotamia, and they are used to suppress people who are friends and neighbours and who have done us no harm. It is time that we put an end to this shameful exploitation of the courage of our manhood. We are told that we are not capable of defending our country against the foreign invasion, but our soldiers are capable enough of defending the British Empire in Europe, in Asia and in Africa. You know how our man-power and our wealth was exploited by the British during the last war. You know also the measure of return that we got for our help, it was the Rowlatt Act and Martial Law in the Punjab. Are you prepared to be deluded again, to be exploited again and to be

thrown into the scrap-heap again? Wise men, they say, profit by the failures and experiences of others; ordinary men by their own experience; and fools by neither.”

Let us confess, Mr. Nichols, that we have been fools. We have allowed ourselves to be befooled by the phrases of democracy uttered by your countrymen. We have diced away our lives to protect the Mother of Parliaments from the iron hand of fascism. We have been deluded again. We have been exploited again. And we have been thrown upon the scrap-heap. Doesn't that sound ironical, Mr. Nichols?

Only a wildly irresponsible person like Beverley Nichols would suggest that the British cannot quit overnight. It is nonsense to believe that India would be “left almost completely defenceless from aggression”. There can never be a greater aggression to India than the fortification of British imperialism. Mr. Nichols seems to have been bemused by British Government propaganda. Being a Britisher, he can only look upon India from the imperialist's point of view. It has been dinned into his head

by the India Office that India is defenceless. We are armless only before the arms of Britain. Give us arms and Britain will be defenceless.

India is not sworn to non-violence, Mr. Nichols. Give us freedom and we are prepared to meet violence with violence. Don't think that India is going to play the role of door-mat to any aggressor. No invader can choose to wipe his feet here. He will rather have his feet wiped out. It is a mechanical age. And in mechanism Indians are as intelligent as Americans and Germans. Give us freedom and we shall find out the secret of the Atomic Bomb, A to Z, within six months. If America can produce secret weapons, India certainly can. India has all the resources for the production of the Atomic Bomb. Unchain our hands and we shall find the tools to do the job.

Don't be so silly as to believe that India will be defended with catapults, barge poles and rotten eggs. India will be protected with V-weapons and stout-hearted patriotism. Even if the Indian army has "to start almost from scratch", in a short time we will make a big wound on the body-politic of British bureaucracy.

III

Will the British quit India?

Well, Nichols, the British will have to. The present state of affairs cannot continue for long. The Labour Government has eaten all its rosy promises and we know exactly where we stand.

When the “bitter” becomes the “bitterest”, it becomes a bit rest. We have understood our relations with reference to British imperialism fully and finally. And consequently, our souls are now quite at rest. Our fears are undisturbed by hope. In the darkness of subjection we are not misled by the mirage of constitutional advance. We have tested our British bosses. And unluckily we have found them wanting.

“Attlee’s heart beats for the down-trodden if they are British,” declared *The Chicago Tribune*, “but he borrows banker’s heart regarding India.” This is the case, in spite of the fact that the Tory Government has been badly beaten on the rocks of the Indian problem. So dejected has been Mr. Winston Churchill that he refused to accept Order of the Garter in recognition of his services as Britain’s wartime Prime Minister. He makes no secret of the fact that he is disgusted

because of his defeat in the general elections. "How can I take a Garter from the King," he said, "when I have just got a boot from the people." What has the Labour Government—for whom the labourers gave a boot to Churchill—has done for the labour of India?

Mr. Winston Churchill, the Democratic Fuehrer, has been dethroned, and the Labour Ministers have been put in the saddle, but what difference has it made to India? The Labour Government is giving us nothing but—as Sir Vijaya of Vizianagram has put it—"crumbs from the table".

Shall we accept the crumbs?—or shall we upset the table? The British must know that India is not in a mood to accept crumbs of democracy. They had rather protect their table of imperialism. We are not going to be beggars. We have determined to be choosers.

Mr. David Carpenter, a British Army Officer, reported in the *London Tribune* that he took part in round table conferences with some twenty Indian officers including six Hindus, one Parsee and thirteen Muslims on the future of India. "Young intellectuals," he said, "who are today officers in the

Indian army, will certainly exert an enormous influence on future Indian politics. Though their experience in the army has not taught them to hate the enemy less, it has taught them to hate the British more. I think they will leave the army embittered by the discrimination and by the superior attitude of their British fellow officers confident in their own ability to administer and command, passionately determined that India must govern herself and equally determined that India must be united so that she may be strong.”

No wonder, Clement Attlee is feeling shilly-shally in offering the right of vote to the personnel of the Indian army in the coming elections. So far the British Imperialists have held down India with Indian arms. How long they can trust the Indian army? *Azad Hind Fauj*, recruited mainly from the British Indian Army, is already a pointer of warning.

Nationalism in India is not the monopoly of any party or individual. The fire of patriotism burns through every hearth and home. A man may be a nationalist without being a Congressman. Many a silk-dressed gentleman is a nationalist to

the backbone, without being even a four-anna member of the Indian National Congress. Congress membership and national spirit overlap each other. They run criss-cross. National circle in India is wider than the Congress orbit. Those who go by statistics of Congress membership are likely to be grossly misled. Congress is voice of active national spirit. Congress is not the body of passive national movement. Nationalism today is rooted in the very soil of India. Its seeds are broadcast from Srinagar to Ceylon. No hand of oppression can weed out the self-respect of the dumb masses. Nationalism grows. It is not inoculated. Seed of nationalism is a divine germ. True nationalists are born rather than made. These are the men who have been aptly called "divine averages" by Walt Whitman, the great American poet of democracy. These men are not turned away by the bludgeonings of chance. Their heads are ever bleeding, but never bowed. British bren-guns and atom bombs cannot stand before these brave people. They must quit—AND QUIT QUIETLY.

